Barcode : 4990010059145
Title - The Legend Of Emperor Asoka In Indian And Chinese Texts
Author - Przyluski,J
Language - english
Pages - 284
Publication Year - 1967
Barcode EAN.UCC-13
4 990010 059145

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THE LEGEND OF EMPEROR ASOKA

J. PRZYLUSKI

THE LEGEND OF EMPEROR ASOKA IN INDIAN AND CHINESE TEXTS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES AND COMMENTS

BY

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FIRMA K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY

CALCUTTA * * 1967

First Edition, 1967

Published by
Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay
6/1A, Banchharam Akrur Lane,
Calcutta 12

Printed by
Paresh Chandra Bose
at the Brahmo Mission Press
211/1, Bidhan Sarani,
Calcutta 6

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. W. Ch.	= A-yu-wang-chuan
A. W. K.	= A-yu-wang-king
B. E. F. E. O.	= Bulletin de l' Ecole Francaise d' Extrème Orient.
Burnouf-Introduction	= Introduction a l' histoire du Buddhisme indien *by* E. Burnouf.
Ep. Ind.	= Epigraphia Indica
Ind. Hist. Quarterly	= Indian Historical Quarterly
J. A.	= Journal Asiatique
J. B. O. R. S.	= Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J. P. T. S.	= Journal of the Pāli Text Society.
J. R. A. S.	= Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
Lebensbeschr.	= Tibetische Lebensbeschreibung *by* Schiefner.
M. A. S. I.	= Memoir of Archaeological Survey of India.
Nanijo.	= Catalogue of the Chinese translations of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka *by* B. Nanijo.
P. T. S.	= Pāli Text Society.
S. K. C.	= Sūtra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka).
Tsa-a-han	= Tsa-a-han-king
Tok.	= Tripiṭaka edited in Tokyo.
V. M. S.	= Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Since its publication from Paris in 1923, Jean Przyluski's *La Legende de l' Empereur Aśoka* had attracted the attention of orientalists all over the world and had promptly taken its rank among classics in Indological literature. The book is divided into two parts : In the first of these the author gives us a minute and critical analysis of the northern Buddhist traditions regarding the Maurya emperor Aśoka as embodied in the *Aśokavadana*. Part II consists of a French translation of the Chinese text *A-yu-wang-chuan*, which is probably the earliest translation into Chinese of the original sanskrit text of the *Aśokāvadānā*, as made by the Parthian monk Fa-k'in about 300 A.D., I have endeavoured in these pages to offer an English translation of Part I of M. Przyluski's work which constitutes his original contribution towards a critical study of some important aspects of the Aśokan traditions of the north.

It will be observed that by his penetrating analysis, the author has adduced convincing grounds for believing that the traditions enshrined in the *Aśokavadana* are older than those in the *Vinaya* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins. He has distinguished three phases in the history of the progress of Buddhism and the Buddhist Church from the lower valley of the Ganges to the table-land of upper Asia, to each of which, according to him, corresponds a distinctive period in the history of Buddhist literature. These have been specified as the Magadha, Mathurā and Kashmir phases respectively. It has been further argued with the help of a wealth of detailed literary data that the *Aśokāvadāna* is a product of the 'Mathurā period'. Regarding the nature and the date of the *Aśokavadana* he has also arrived at positive conclusions. He seeks to show that the text is a blend of composite elements which include an original *Aśokasūtra* coated with the account of the First Council and other historical details about the early Buddhist Church. This *Aśokasūtra* dealing with the exploits of the Maurya emperor, is placed by him between c. 150-50 B.C. The detailed and

analytical study of the legend of Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja forming chapter v and the two very interesting chapters on "Aśoka's Hell" and "Development of Eschatological Ideas in Buddhism" constitute a few other valuable aspects of the author's study that will be found particularly refreshing to the students of Buddhism. The significant parallels between Buddhism and certain aspects of Zoroastrianism emphasised in the last two sections, might suggest new lines of enquiry to researchers, specially in the back-ground of the intimate contact once established between the two faiths in the north-western borders of India. The value of M. Przyluski's study for the students of history cannot also be denied. He has clearly established that the Aśokan traditions had permeated the northern Buddhist world of Asia and had become an integral part of the imagination of a considerable section of humanity, at an early date. An acquaintance with this mental frame may be profitably made a part of our historical studies unless by the cultivation of the historical discipline we choose merely to imply enumeration and interpretation of "events", excluding all allusions to human thought-process.

A slight change in the arrangement of chapters will be marked in the present volume. While the author did not include his discussion of the 'Recensions of the Aśokāvadāna' in the series of chapters in the original, I have made it 'chapter i' in my translation. The number of chapters has thus increased to nine in the English version instead of eight as in the original. The author's footnotes have all been placed at the ends of the respective chapters. The additional notes and comments introduced by me, have been found necessary sometimes in order to elucidate the cryptic references of the author or to elaborate some of his points that have been briefly stated; and sometimes to indicate alternative theories or lines of investigation that have come into the field since the publication of his work. These observations also will be found at the ends of the chapters, marked 'translator'. I regret to have to state that it has not been possible always to maintain uniformity in the spelling of proper names or regularity in the use of diacritical marks a glaring instance of which is the printing of the

name Asaṅga as Āsaṅga on pages 191-92. This and some other notable irregularities and misprints have been noticed in the errata at the end.

In conclusion, I consider it my pleasant duty to offer my gratitude and thanks to all those who have helped me directly or indirectly in my task. I may start by paying my respectful tribute to the memory of the late Professor Prabodh Chandra Bagchi M.A. (Cal.) Dr. ès.-Lettres (Paris) to whom I owe my interest in Continental Indology. To Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sircar, Carmichael Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta I am grateful for the interest he has taken in the progress of the work. A word must be said about the unfailing courtsey and co-operation received from Sri Kanai Lal Mukhopadhyay of Messrs. Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay who has taken the responsibility of publishing the present volume as well as from Sri Biman Ranjan Sinha who has designed the jacket. My thanks are further due to Sri Sukumar Sengupta, lecturer in Pāli, University of Calcutta, for the loan of an important book of reference and to my wife Bharati for ungrudging assistance in the task of reading the proofs. I alone am however responsible for any mistake I may have committed in preparing the book for the press, as also for the opinions expressed therein.

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August 23, 1967
Bhādra 6, 1374 B. S.

Dilip Kumar Biswas

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In order to know primitive Buddhism one must take into consideration the traditions concerning its founder. The Buddha legend, besides containing informations, however imperfect, on doctrine, has unfolded itself gradually in the bosom of the communities of the faithful. It is therefore necessary in the beginning to study the history of these communities, their inclinations, dogmas and geographical distribution. Only by gaining an intimate knowledge of the rival sects one can afterwards make an attempt to extricate the common doctrine that preceded them and then one may as well have a chance to get an insight into the career, personality and teaching of the Master.

It is well-known that among the various schools of Buddhism, that of the Sthaviravāda had Pāli for its sacred language while the religious literature of the Sarvāstivādins had been worded in Sanskrit. The authors of the Sthaviravāda School are much better known than those of the rival sects. Yet judging by the great quantity and value of the works it has left, it appears that the Sarvāstivāda School is no less important in any field and that during a long succession of centuries it has preached the doctrine with vigorous enthusiasm.

When almost simultaneously Edouard Huber and M. Sylvain Lévi discovered that certain stories of the *Divyāvadāna* were drawn from the *Aśokāvadāna* while the majority of others formed part of the *Vinaya* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins, an important point in the history of the Buddhist sects was gained; it became evident that the three works, based on common traditions were closely connected, and counted among the most important texts of the Sarvāstivādin School (Edouard Huber *Sources du Divyavadāna* B. E. F. E. O. VI Nos. 1-2 ; Sylvain-Lévi *Les Elements de formation du Divyāvadāna* T'oung Pao VIII pp. 105-22).

In the beginning of the year 1914, on the advice of M, Sylvain Lévi I attempted the study and translation of different texts extracted principally from the *Aśokavadāna* and the *Vinaya* of the Mula-Sarvāstivādins. That study was interrupted by the war. My teacher desired very much to undertake to revise and publish the translated texts. He had them preceded by an illuminating preface in which he put in relief the various conclusious of the publication. "The work makes it quite clear," wrote M. Sylvain Lévi, "that the Mūla-Sarvāstivāda School had its positive links with Kashmir and its neighbouring regions. If it has chosen Sanskrit as its sacred language, that choice appears to attest well the privileged position of Sanskrit as the literary language of Kashmir about the time when the redaction of the Vinaya took place." (*Le Nord-Ouest de l' Inde dans le Vinaya des Sarvāstivādin et les textes apparenté's* J. A. 1914 II p. 494).

This first work led gradually to more extensive researches. If it does no longer appear doubtful that the *Vinaya* of the Mula-Sarvāstivādins has received its definite form in Kashmir or in some neighbouring country, it is no less certain that it has not been developed all at once. That monumental work in which has been incorporated an entire collection of stories, legends and sūtras along with fragments having reference to discipline, could only have been compiled in an epoch when the religious literature of the Sarvāstivādins was already highly developed. Is it not possible to get hold of some of these productions in a less evolved from, which would be very close to the original ? For the solution of this problem the *Aśokavadāna* is of supreme importance. One precisely finds there in a very archaic form the traditions comparable to those that the *Vinaya* of the Mula-Sarvāstivādins has recorded with the rest,- notably a biography of the early patriarchs of the Church and the narrative of a journey which the Buddha was supposed to have undertaken to the north-west of India.

In striving chiefly to throw into relief the features that manifest the aspirations of the author and through them his personality, and reveal the intentions, sympathies and the desires of the members of his monastery and his Church, I

hope to have demonstrated that the *Aśokāvadāna* had been composed by a monk of the Mathurā region belonging to the Mūla-Sarvāstivāda School who had lived more than a century before Kanishka, that is to say, long before the final composition of the actual *Vinaya* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins.

Thus localised in time and space, the *Aśokāvadāna* stands as a historic document of the first order which enables us to lay hold of the Buddhist tradition in a decisive moment of its development, when the Church on its way to expansion towards the north-west overstepped the narrow circle of the early Magadhan Communities and rapidly assimilated the ancient Brahmanical civilisation of Madhyadeśa.

The *Aśokāvadāna* enables us to view under a new aspect a number of very diverse subjects viz. the history of the First Council and the local communities, the lives of the patriarchs, etc. It was impossible to study the work without casting a glance at all these directions. In a simple monograph I have been obliged to make an effort to draw the general indications without concealing from myself the risks actually involved in such an enterprise. Later when we shall possess a large number of monographs on the sacred texts, the field of conjecture will grow narrower ; some tracks may have to be recrossed, while others must be abandonned.

The present volume was in impression when M. Paul Pelliot had the kindness to draw my attention to a fragment of the *Ta-che-tu-luen* a translation of which will be found in Appendix I. This eminently illuminating text contrasts the *Vinaya* of Mathurā which included the *Jātakas* and the *Avadānas*, with the *Vinaya* of Kashmir that had rejected them. This would further affirm and elucidate the distinction posed between the Schools of Mathurā and Kashmir—a distinction which I consider fundamental. Henceforth one knows that each of these religious centres which were undoubtedly the two poles of the Sarvāstivādin world, had its particular Vinaya. That of Mathurā is very likely to have been lost ; since the *Avadānas* formed part of it, it is just possible, it might have

included the *Aśokavadāna* as well. We are permitted to ask ourselves whether the *Divyāvadāna*, a collection of legends which had circulation in the Sarvāstivādin world, is not drawn almost entirely from the Vinaya of Mathurā. The enormous Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins crowded all over with the *Jātakas* and the *Avadānas* is possibly itself only the ancient *Vinaya* of Kashmir enlarged by its *Vibhāsha* and enriched by fragments borrowed from the literature of the sect. As one enumerates its treasures, the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins appears up to a certain point to be the compendium of the Sarvāstivāda School.

In setting forth in the preface the genesis of the present work, I have expressed very inadequately what I owe to M. Sylvain Lévi. Among others to whom I have obligations, I desire particularly to thank M. Paul Pelliot whose advice has proved valuable to me and to whom I am indebted for a whole series of observations.

INTRODUCTION

We shall leave aside the problem of individual identity of the author of the *Aśokavadāna*. Lik so many other monuments of Buddhist literature this work has come down to us without the name of its author. The omission is perhaps not specially regrettable, because such instances are frequent. In a country where the lives of great authors are known, a name in a manuscript may suffice to class a work among the productions of a particular school by the side of the writings of the same age and the same region. The case is not the same in India at least in respect of the ancient period and particularly in the field of religious literature. If we had known by whom the *Aśokavadāna* had been written, that fact by itself would not possibly have led to any important consequence. It is in the book itself that we must look for the secret of its origin. Where and when was it composed ? It contains sufficient number of positive data, semi-historic legends and geographically localised traditions which make it possible to answer these two questions at least approximately.

We may start with a summary review of the considerable part played by the regional schools in the evolution of Buddhism and the formation of the Canon. It is only in a sufficiently late period that one can distinguish between the Buddhism of the north and that of the south ; and moreover the first of these expressions' dear to European scholars, comprises within an artifical framework very diverse realities. On the contrary, there appears to have been from early times a Church of the east and a Church of the west. According to the Pāli *Chullavagga* (XII. 2.7), each of these two territorial groups had deputed four noble representatives to the Council of Vaiśālī. However, in the absence of a central power exercising spiritual authority over all the fraternities, oriental and occidental, the local communities must certainly have enjoyed a large measure of autonomy. For example, it does not appear that in the region of the west the fraternities of

Kauśāmbī, Ujjayinī, Mathurā and Kashmir had ever been included in a strongly centralised organisation. Each of these had its own sanctuaries, its saints, its traditions, its preferences in matters of dogma and its discipline. These particular tendencies are reflected in the writings of their scholars so that it is possible by analysing such works to determine where these have been composed. We are going to show that the *Aśokāvadāna* had its positive roots in the region of Mathurā,

It is in the eastern reign of north India that the Buddha was born, had conceived and preached his doctrine and had died. There existed here the sacred places where the faithful went on pilgrimage. In the same region again assembled the two great Councils of Rājagṛiha and Vaiśālī. When Buddhism was propagated in the west the new communities appeared as upstarts by the side of the ancients. It was disquieting for them that they could not establish their claims to the admiration of the faithful. The legend of the Buddha having been already fixed in its essential features, one could not think of shifting towards the west, the places of the principal scenes of his life. It became necessary to imagine new episodes in order to prove the sacredness of the regions newly converted. It was supposed that the Buddha, shortly before his death, had visited the north-western region where he had worked many miracles and predicted the advents of Madhyāntika and Upagupta. This journey has been narrated in a certain number of tales particularly in the *Aśokaavadāna* and the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāsti vādins. I have already partly translated these two accounts (*Le Nord Ouest de l'Inde dans le Vinaya des Mūla-Sarvāstivādin* J. A. 1914 II pp. 495-522, 538-40). It will not be altogether profitless to compare these in detail.

In the *Aśokāvādāna* the Buddha while travelling through the country of Mathurā predicts the foundation of the monastery of Naṭa-Bhaṭa and expounds the merits to be acquired by Upagupta. Then he goes to Kashmir and predicts the conversion of the country by the monk Madhyāntika. The account of the journey to Mathurā is more elaborate than the part of the text devoted to Kashmir. The latter occupies not more than ten lines in the French translation.

In the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins the journey to Mathurā is narrated nearly in the same terms ; the Buddha is accompanied by Ānanda ; he predicts the foundation of the monastery of Naṭa-Bhaṭa, the conversion and the merits of Upagupta. Nevertheless one difference deserves to be noted ; in the Vinaya Upagupta is converted by Madhyāntika, the apostle of Kashmir, whereas in the *Aśokāvadāna* he had as his master Śāṇavāsa. the apostle of Mathurā.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the journey to Kashmir had taken place in the company of Ānanda after the passage to the country of Mathurā. In the V.M.S. the Buddha betakes himself first to the upper valley of the Indus and on that occasion he is accompanied by the yaksha Vajrapāṇi. He visits the future site of the monastery of the Dark Forest, converts the nāga-king Apalāla and predicts the apostleship of Madhyāntika. Then he travels through Kanthā, the city of the Granary of Rice, Revata and a series of other localities where he brings about many conversions. At last while passing through the village of Kharjūra he predicts that king Kanishka will erect a grand stūpa at the place. The story of the journey with Vajrapāṇi occupies ten pages of my French translation.

Thus while in the *Aśokāvadāna* the journey to Kashmir follows the passage to Mathurā and is only briefly indicated, in the Vinaya the Buddha is made to visit first the region watered by the upper Indus and her tributaries and this part of the journey is by far the most elaborately treated. The author of the first narrative was concerned above all to glorify Mathurā while the compilers of the Vinaya had the good reputation of Kashmir and the neighbouring territories in view. The *Aśokāvadāna* and the V. M. S. must have been composed in the western region, the first at Mathurā and the second, more to the north.

Buddhist propaganda, exerting itself in the lower valley of the Ganges, must have first touched the country of Mathurā and reached the Kashmir region only afterwards. Logically therefore, the itinerary that gives preference to the country of Mathurā and conducts the master there first, must be older. In fact the *Aśokāvadāna* contains an archaic version of the journey

of the Buddha towards the west while the version of the Vinaya is later.

In the earlier *sūtras* Ānanda is the favourite disciple of Śākyamuni. A servant of the Buddha, he follows him in all circumstances and for that reason, of all the listeners it is he who knows well the sayings of the Master. In the *Aśokavadāna* he accompanies the Master to Mathurā and to Kashmir. In the V. M. S. the Buddha makes his grand journey to the north-west with the yaksha Vairapāṇi ; then he rejoins Ānanda and goes with him to Mathurā. Vajrapāṇi has been frequently represented in the Graeco-Buddhist sculptures of Gandhāra ; as a contrast he never appears in the earlier art-monuments and literature of Buddhism. If the redactors of the Vinaya have preferred him to the great disciple (Ānanda), it is because, at the time they wrote, Ānanda was no longer as much venerated, as he had been during the early centuries of the Church. Possibly the substitution of the yaksha for the bhikshu is but late. The story of the *Aśokavadāna* that makes Ānanda travel everywhere in the company of the Buddha, reflects more ancient conceptions ; and it is significant that even in the Vinaya the disciple accompanies Śākyamuni to Mathurā because that part of the narrative having been long fixed, the Kashmirian compilers have simply reproduced it almost without any modification.

In the *Aśokavadāna* Upagupta is a disciple of Śāṇavāsa and both are apostles of the Mathurā region. Likewise in a passage of the V. M. S. the āyusmat Ānanda says to the bhikshu Śāṇika (Śāṇavāsa) : "In the kingdom of Mathurā there is a perfume merchant named Gupta. He will have a son named Upagupta. Thou shalt convert him and make him renounce the world". (*Le-Nord-Ouest de l' Inde* J. A. 1914, II p. 531). But the Vinaya contradicts itself in the story of the journey to the north-west. The following prophesy is attributed to the Buddha : "A disciple of the Buddha, named Madhyāntika will convert Upagupta and make him a bhikshu" (*Le-Nord-Ouest de l' Inde* J. A. 1914, II p. 519). The reason for this modification is clear. Madhyāntika is the apostle of Kashmir. By making him the master of Upagupta the great saint of Mathurā, the Vinaya was clearly establishing the superiority

and antiquity of the Kashmirian Church. It will be seen by what artifices the rival communities procured for themselves. arguments in favour of the theses that seemed agreeable to them. The lesson of the *Aśokāvadāna* is confirmed by the Vinaya itself. The Kashmirian compilers therefore knew an ancient text similar to that of the *Aśokāvadāna*. They have knowingly altered it in order to exalt their land at the expense of Mathurā.

One thus comes to notice a contradiction between the two passages of the V. M. S. I have come across a second one in the story of the journey itself. Speaking to Vajrapāṇi at the spot where the monastery of the Dark Forest was to be set up, the Buddha says: "For the study of *samatha* this will be the best place". (Le *Nord-Ouest de l' Inde* J. A, 1914, II p. 508) And when he travels through Kashmir the Buddha says with reference to the place where Madhyāntika was later to subdue the nāga Hu-lu-t'u: "The most important of the monasteries for the cultivation of *vipaśyanā* shall be established there" (*Le Nord-Ouest de l 'Inde* J, A. 1914, II p. 513). Later showing to Ānanda the future site of the Naṭa-bhaṭa monastery in the country of Mathurā, he makes the following prediction: "Among the habitations of those who practise the methods of *samatha and vipaśyanā*, this will be the premier one". (*Le Nord-Ouest de l 'Inde* J. A, 1914, II p, 518). It will be seen to what extent these compilers were negligent and without scruple. After having attributed to the Buddha two prophesies destined to exalt the monasteries of the northern region they have carelssly reproduced an ancient text that contradicts the previous assertion!

The story of the journey of the Buddha preserved in the *Aśokāvadāna* being earlier than the corresponding version of the V.M.S., it is possible to picture to oneself, to what extent it has passed from the one to the other. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the Buddha converted first the nāga king Apalāla, the master-potter, the Chaṇḍāla, a cow-herd and a nāga; then the betook himself to Mathurā and from there to Kashmir. Where did these conversions take place? According to the V. M. S. these had taken place in the north-western region; but there are reasons to think that this localisation is wilful and it aims at magnifying

the events of which the Indus region is the theatre. Originally Apalāla and the other converts must have lived in eastern India, since the Buddha had met them in the beginning of his journey. In the 'Life of Buddha' in Tibetan, translated by Schiefner the *nāga* Apalāla is represented as being reborn in Magadha (cf. Schiefner *Lebensbeschr* p. 54). In the *Fen-pie-kong-to-luen* which is in part a commentary on the *Ekottarāgama*, the Buddha converted a nāga named "Without-Leaves" that had devastated Magadha (*Le-Nord-Ouest de l 'Inde*. J. A. 1914, II pp. 559 ff). Watters accepts the identity of "Without-Leaves" and Apalāla (J. R. A. S. 1898, p. 340)[1]. The two forms are by no means exactly superposable, but the same mythical being very often possessed different names, specially if it was terrible by nature, and the Chinese translator of the *Fen-pie kong-to-luen* might have read "Without-Leaves" (Apalāśa) in place of "Without-Stubble" (Apalāla). Besides, in the narrative of the V. M. S. the Buddha says to the nāga king Apalāla : "See to it that all the inhabitants of Magadha may be relieved of terror !,' (*Le Nord-Ouest de l' Inde* J. A. 1914 II p. 512 note 1). This recommendation would be unintelligible if the nāga was a resident of north-western India ; it becomes clear the moment one admits that the legend was originally localised in Magadha. On this occasion too, the careless compilers have left in the parts handled by them details contradictory to the general body of the narrative,

Starting from Magadha where he had converted the nāga-king, the Buddha also brought about other conversions before he reached Mathurā. The whole of that part of the journey has been transposed by the Kashmirian compilers and shifted towards the north-west. From now on the conversion of the master-potter takes place at Revata ; that of the cowherd and the nāga in the town of 'Miss-Protector' (Kūṭapāla ?) ; finally it is at Nandivardhana that the sons of the Chaṇḍālī submit to the Buddha.

In the new account, the conversion of Apalāla having taken place before the Buddha's arrival in Kashmir, is immediately followed by the master's prediction relating to this country. Thus the order of the ancient narrative is completely upset. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the journey of the Buddha comprises three

elements : a. the conversion of Apalāla, of the master-potter, etc ; b. the journey to Mathurā. ; c. the passage to Kashmir. In the V.M.S. these elements follow each other in a new order : a. the conversion of Apalāla ; b. passage to Kashmir ; c. conversion of the master-potter, etc, ; d. journey to Mathurā.

On the whole the comparison leads to two distinct conclusions : 1. the account of the journey of the Buddha in the *Aśokāvadāna* is earlier than the corresponding passage of the V M.S. ; 2. the preferences of the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* lay towards the country of Mathurā, while the compilers of the Vinaya took pleasure in glorifying the more northern regions. Of the two propositions, the first is the starting point of our researches on the date of the *Aśokāvadāna*. The second informs us implicitly about the place where the work had been composed ; it is moreover corroborated by other indications of the same nature.

Of all the saints whose lives have been narrated in the *Aśokāvadāna* Upagupta is by far the one that most engages our attention. The prophesy of the Buddha concerning him is repeated many times. He accompanies Aśoka in the latter's pilgrimage to the sacred places. His previous births and the merits acquired by him. are summed up before the story of the First Council. Then his legend is narrated in detail after that of his teacher Sāṇavāsa. Finally the circumstances in which he converted his numerous disciples, form the subject-matter of a very extensive chapter. This emphasis is explained by the fact that Upagupta is the great savant of Mathurā and to exalt him is the same as to glorify the community whose chief he was.

The same partiality also manifests itself in the details of his legend. Śākyamuni predicts that Upagupta shall be 'a Buddha without the signs' (*alakshaṇaka Buddha*) ; he shall do the work of the Buddha and the conversions performed by him shall be innumerable. The Buddha had not certainly converted Māra, the personification of Evil. He had done this in order to leave to Upagupta the glory of carrying this difficult enterprise to a successful conclusion. This did not however affect in any way his prestige, spiritual merits and human greatness. Upagupta became a prominent

figure in the cycle of Aśokan legends ; one would picture him as an intimate adviser to a Chakravarti-ruler who is the master of the earth. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the all powerful monarch receives the priest of Mathurā in his palace and makes on the latter's advice magnificent offerings to the stūpas of the Buddha and his great disciples.

The anxiety to glorify Mathurā, its saints and monasteries, is not manifest only in the account of the journey of the Buddha ; it shows itself in all the sections of the *Aśokāvadāna*. The work could have been entitled, 'Eulogy and Illustriousness of the Church of Mathurā". Never have local influences determined more rigorously the contents of a religious book. This *māhātmya* could have only been written by an author belonging to the Mathurā region

The number and variety of the recensions that have come down to us, prove the success and the diffusion of the *Aśokāvadāna*. For a book so much saturated with regionalism to have been appreciated far from the place of its origin, it became necessary for the Church of Mathurā to have a privileged situation, and further that it should contribute in a large measure to the radiation of the faith ; otherwise its pretensions to the premier rank would not have failed to look ridiculous. The circumstances explain the influence exercised by the inhabitants of Mathurā on the development and propagation of Buddhism. This city was situated on one of the great commercial routes of India ; besides, its monk-authors had probably further inherited from the ancient brāhmaṇas the knowledge of Sanskrit as well as the literary and philosophical traditions.

Since the time of the Mauryas, Pātaliputra had remained linked with Gandhāra by an imperial route laid out on the model of the Achaemenian roads. This royal highway played a very important part in the political and economic life of India. After the foundation of the Greek kingdom of Bactria the commercial relations between the valleys of the Ganges and the Oxus became very brisk. For the caravans full of the products of Bactria and Kashmir, Mathurā was the first great city of the Madhyadeśa on coming out of the valley of the Indus. Her material prosperity is thus explained by her particular location.

It appears that Buddhism which first struck root in Magadha and its neighbouring regions, was propagated in preference along the great commercial routes, thanks to the moral support and munificence of the merchants and caravan-drivers. It is almost a truism to say that new ideas follow commercial currents. In the Indian principalities the members of the superior castes as well as the peasants must at first have proved rebellious towards influences from outside, the former from political reasons and the latter from apathy. On the contrary, the merchants whom travel and business had brought regularly in contact with the inhabitants of other countries, were more permeable to new ideas and less conservative than the members of other castes.

From Pāṭaliputra, the new city that had become since the time of the Mauryas the capital of India and afterwards the metropolis of Buddhism, three high roads extended to the frontiers of the empire : that of the south-west towards Barygaza through Kauśāmbī and Ujjayinī ; that of the north towards Nepal through Vaiśālī and Śrāvastī ; and finally the longest one, that of the north-west, setting towards Bactria, through Mathurā and the upper valley of the Indus. The presence of the sanctuaries of Sāñchī and Barhut in the neighbourhood of the southern route testifies to the rapid penetration of Buddhism in that direction (cf. Lacote *Essai sur Gunāḍhya et la Bṛihatkathā* p. 235). I have already endeavoured to indicate the progress of the doctrine in the north, by showing the gradual shifting of the traditional scenes (connected with Buddhism) from Rājagṛiha towards Vaiśālī and afterwards towards the prosperous city of Śrāvastī (*Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha* J. A. 1918, II p. 455). In the west the pace of success had possibly been a little slower because here one had to confront a zone of the old Brahmaṇical culture. Nevertheless the account of the Second Council in the Pāli *Chullavagga* could only have been written in an epoch when Mathurā was already the seat of an influential Buddhist community (cf. *infra* p. 15). The wealth of this city as well as its situation on the high road running through the western region, partly explains the importance of these monasteries and the role these have played in the diffusion of Buddhism.

To these economic factors were added spiritual causes, less apparent but equally efficacious. During the time of the Buddha the Gangetic basin was geographically and morally divided into two zones : in the west lay the plain watered by the parallel streams of the Ganges and the Yamunā ; in the east was the lower valley where the Ganges, widening, separated the two great tribes, the Videhas and the Magadhas. The occidental region was a land of ancient Brahmanical culture. It was the land of the Brahmarshis. "From a brāhmaṇa born in this country, all persons, according to Manu, must accept their rule of conduct" (Manu, quoted by Oldenberg *Le Buddha* trans. Foucher, p. 10). There had continued the knowledge of the Vedas and its indispensable complement, the teaching of the Sanskrit language. On the contrary the tribes of the eastern region had not behind them a past as brilliant. They had only been touched on the surface by the civilisation of the west. The local dialects were probably very unpolished. Human minds here had hardly been refined by philosophical speculations.

It is in this eastern region, principally in Magadha, that the earliest Buddhist communities had developed. The texts containing in a condensed form the teachings of the Master were probably written in the Magadhan dialect, and for the purpose of being remembered easily this oral literature was almost entirely in rythmic verse. The metrical element far outweighed the prose both in length and importance Such were originally the stories of the *Jātakas* ; nearly in a like manner was preserved the very archaic text, *Suttanipāta.* As far as one may judge them from the Sanskrit and Pāli translations or adaptations, the primitive texts were composed in a language which was simple and monotonous. They owed their beauty rather to the profound sentiment that inspired them, than to any choice of expression or cleverness of style. This might have sufficed as long as the doctrine amounted to a number of puerile apologues or an enumeration of simple truths. But in order to develop itself the new faith had to compete with other sects. It became necessary to enter into public debates with the philosophers as well as into trials of eloquence with brahmaṇas grounded in Vedic studies.

From that time the inadequacy of the original *sūtras* readily began to make itself felt. One now needed a religious literature written in a literary language as rich and noble as possible. It was no longer sufficient merely to affirm ; it was necessary to argue and to persuade, to combat the errors of the opponents, to exalt the New Law, to glorify its saints and lay-protectors ; and for all this to make an extensive use of the prose.

When Buddhism penetrated to the western part of the Gangetic basin, those needs made themselves felt more acutely than ever ; and as if to meet the situation the monks found the very same region to be the home of the philosophical speculations of the Upanishads. The earliest converted literati had put into the services of their faith, their knowledge of Sanskrit and their experiences as rhetoricians and dialecticians. We believe, from this arose the importance of the western Church. It had not been sanctified by the apostleship of the Buddha and his earliest pupils. But its monks were more learned than those of the earlier orders. They were capable of writing the sacred language of the Vedas. Likewise one finds developing in the west, particularly at Mathurā, a new literature of which the *Aśokāvadāna* appears to have been one of the most characteristic specimens.

Written in Sanskrit, it is clearly the reverse of the earlier productions in the Magadhan dialect. It is a work in which the prose dominates. Outside the sections borrowed from earlier literature, like the narrtive of the First Council, the gāthās in it, are generally speaking only accessory elements, mere ornaments of the story. One comes across here early applications of the processes of the *alaṃkāra* in which Aśvaghosha and the Kashmirian writers were to excel later. The *Aśokāvadāna* is a literary composition containing magnificent fragments. It is far removed from the brief, naive and impersonal productions at which the first batch of the faithful zealously tried its hand. It is the work of a writer of talent who conducts his story cleverly, improves upon the tragic situations and utilises tastefully the resources of an admirable language.

The contrast is not less sharp with regard to the substratum. The authors of the ancient *sūtras* lay claim to but little more

than to have reproduced the sayings of the Master. In their narratives the central figure is always Śākyamuni or one of his contemporaries. The *Aśokāvadāna* conveys us at the first onset to the times that follow the death of the Buddha. It contains a chronicle of the regin of Aśoka and the first few centures of the Buddhist Church. And while the earlier authors come forward chiefly to show the path of deliverance to the recluses eager for obtaining Nirvāṇa, the writer of the *Aśokāvadāna* endeavours to achieve results more complex and less superhuman. He does not address himself merely to the clergy, but also to the pious laity that sustained the Church by its charity; he desires to instruct and moralise through scenes from the lives of saints and great men; he sets up the excessive liberalities of the pious king Aśoka, as example to the donors; he exalts his country and his monastery over those of the rival communities.

This somewhat vain ardour to vie with groups of the faithful belonging to the same doctrine, was stimulated by the spirit of controversy and theological discussion. The appearance of dissident sects inside the Buddhist Church is a very early event. According to the Pāli *Chullavagga* (XI. 1. 11), immediately after the First Council, Purāṇa had claimed the right to abide by the Dharma and the Vinaya just as he had understood them. The divergences must have been irrevocably accentuated in proportion as Buddhism spread itself over a wider terrain. What were the affinites of the Buddhist community of Mathurā?

The *Aśokāvadāna* is written in Sanskrit. A text frequently cited, informs us that the Sarvāstivādins contrary to the practice of other sects, studied their sacred books in Sanskrit (cf. Lacote *Essai sur Guṇāḍhya et la Bṛihatkatha* p. 44). Besides, the earliest inscriptions of Mathurā speak of donations and erection of monuments for the benefit of the Sarvāstivādins. One is thus led to suppose that the development of the School of Mathurā was interlinked with the Sarvāstivādin movement. This conjecture is confirmed by other facts. The traditions relating to the journey of the Buddha to the west, are reported all together in the *Aśokāvadāna* as well as in the V. M. S. In studying afterwards the lists of Patriarchs and the accounts of

the First Council one would come across fresh points of agreement between the *Aśokavadāna* and the V. M. S. The *Divyāvadāna* is almost entirely composed of fragments borrowed from these two works. The author of that collection. who belonged evidently to the Sarvāstivādin School, did not certainly place heterodox fragments by the side of the Vinaya of his sect.

I have already published extracts from the V. M. S. from which it becomes clear that this sect had its links with Kashmir and the neighbouring regions (*Le Nord-Ouest de l 'Inde* J. A, 1914 II p. 494). It appears that the Sarvāstivāda School had developed at first at Mathurā and had afterwards extended its offshoots in the direction of the north-west. The secondary groups arising out of the Mathurā School having gradually grown into separate bodies, a Kashmirian sect had rightly or wrongly assumed the name Mūla-Sarvāstivādin in order to prove its attachment to the primitive tradition. I can only indicate here, without being in any sense dogmatic, the general curve of this evolution. At any rate, it is of some use to have demonstrated that the *Aśokāvadāna* is one of the basic elements in a study having for the object the origin and development of the Sarvāstivāda sects.

Here was therefore Buddhism that had made its way to Mathurā, fertilising Sanskait prose and producing new works of the type of the *Aśokavadāna*. Fortified by its conquests, it continued its advance along the western route and lost no time in annexing Kashmir and Gandhāra to itself. Thanks to the patronage of the rich merchants of Takshaśilā and Purushapura (Peshawar) it multiplied its establishments. In these regions of the north-west where the population was a mixed one due to the successive foreign invasions, the doctrine became flexible and eclectic. In the vicinity of the Parthian empire it was tinged with Iranianism. A new art developed in imitation of Greek models. Buddhism at that time ceased to be a purely Indian religion. It was now a complex structure in which Greek art, Iranian dualism, the philosophy of the Madhyadeśa and the old Magadhan elements, all had their place. The diversity of its constituents rendered it all the more accessible to foreigners. When after the Scythian and the Parthian invaders, the wave of the Yue-chis burst over

the Indian frontiers, the new-comers were not late in showing veneration to Śakyamuni by the side of the Iranian divinities. Under Kanishka prospects of unlimited expansion opened before Buddhism towards central Asia. This monarch summoned to Kashmir, the scholars and the poets. Tradition even affirms that he had sponsored a Buddhist Council. A literary school was founded, of which Aśvaghosha is the most illustrious representative. The activities of the writers were prodigious. Along with works, as delicate and and refined as the *Sutralāṃkāra* and the *Buddhacharita*, the compilers produced monumental treatises like the *Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins*. The fecundity of the Kashmirian commentators is characterised in these terms in the Mahāyānist sūtra *Lien-hua-mien-king*: "All the collections of the sayings and expressions of the Tathāgatha, that there are......... the Arhats (of Ki-pin) will bring together again and will make *śastras* from them." (Sylvain Lèvi *Notes chinoises sur l 'Inde* B. E. F. E. O. 1905 p. 46).

In short one may specify three great phases in the expansion of Buddhism from the lower valley of the Ganges to the table-land of upper Asia. To each of these phases corresponds a distinctive period in the history of the Canon and of Buddhist literature. First within the limits of Magadha and its neighbourhood, the disciples of Śākyamuni transmit orally compositions that are sufficiently brief, almost entirely in verse and expressed in the Magadhan dialect. Much later in the west, in the plain watered by the Ganges and the Yamunā, the new converts put into the service of their faith the literary Sanskrit prose and the dialectic of the philosophers. It is the period of Mathurā, marked by the redaction of longer and more perfect works such as the *Aśokavadāna*. Finally making its way to Kashmir, Buddhism proves itself more and more eclectic, heartily welcoming foreigners. It loses the character of a local sect and becomes a universal religion. A third school is established; side by side great poets like Aśvaghosha, work numerous other writers and compilers who embellish, recast, comment on, develop and collect the ancient texts.

The position of the Church during each of these periods transpires in the stories of the Councils. After the death of the Master his disciples decided to meet together for the pur-

pose of codifying the sacred texts. At that time there were two important groups among the followers of the Buddha, north of the Ganges : the companions of Ānanda and the disciples of Mahākāśyapa. However it was at Rājagṛiha the capital of Magadha, that the Council was held. The accounts of that event consist of elements of diverse dates, but as one looks at it further, the narrative is found crystallised around a versified nucleus, more ancient than the prose text. This predominance of the metrical element characterises the period of Magadha as well as the place chosen for the session of the assembly. Later the excesses of the monks of Vaiśāli obliged the more austere elements among the clergy to convene a Second Council. In the narrative of the Pāli *Chullavagga* (XII. 1. 8.) Yaśas betakes himself to the west, to the hermitage of Śāṇavāsī[1] and before them congregates large number of bhikshus belonging to Avanti and its neighbourhood and to the southern region in general. Yaśas finishes with a triumph thanks to the support of the western Buddhist communities. From that time the prepondraence of the latter begins to be affirmed. After the invasion of the Yueh-Chis Kanishka assembled a Third[2] Council in Kashmir and Aśvaghosha was given the charge of drawing up the *Vibhāṣā*. These events mark some sort of a continuous shifting of the centre of the Church towards the west. They presuppose an evolution conforming to the one of which we have just traced the broad lines.

This total view is necessary in order to determine at least approximately the epoch during which the *Aśokāvadāna* had been composed. In matters relating to Buddhist literature where the entire chronology is uncertain, the most one can do for a non-dated work, is to indicate its rank among other productions of the same order and to fix the moment of its appearance through such references to events of political or religious history as it may contain. For attaining this result a minute analysis is indispensable ; but the enquiry has chances of bearing fruit only if one tries to be sure of his ground by choosing certain landmarks from the enormous mass of facts. This is why we have distinguished three phases in the history of Buddhist literature and we have shown that the *Aśokāvadāna* is a characteristic product of the intermediate period.

This is undoubtedly only a provisional and approximate solution ; but as we remain henceforth within fixed limits we run lesser risk of being misled in our ulterior investigations.

Moreover, under the single title *Aśokāvadāna* are generally grouped four recensions of different ages and contents. Handded down from generation to generation by men who did not feel any scruple to alter old texts, the work has naturally undergone a number of transformations. Composed originally by an author belonging to the Mathurā region, it could not pass unscathed through the ensuing Kashmirian phase. Leaving aside the two versions inserted in the *Saṃyuktāgama* and the *Divyāvadāna* that have been excised and recast at will by the compilers, the differences separating the *A-yu-wang king* and the *A-yu-wang-chuan* themselves prove that no miracle has saved even those two texts from the process of contamination. It remains for us to examine each chapter so as to distinguish the important traditional elements from subsequent interpolations. But to begin with such a process of analysis one runs the risk of losing sight of the general characteristics of the work and attributing an exaggerated importance to the details. Before adopting any other measure it seems preferable therefore to place the entire work against its proper historical and geographical background.

To sum up, the *Aśokāvadāna* is a product of the School of Mathurā. A land of old Brahmanical culture, enriched by the continuous passage of caravans, the capital of the Śūrasenas was situated on the axis of the diffusion of the oriental Buddhism of Magadha towards the Indus. It was a place of choice for the establishment of a prosperous community and the creation of new works in literary Sanskrit prose. The age in which the *Aśokāvadāna* takes its place, was in every respect one of transition : from the rough rhapsodies of primitive Buddhism to the refined works of the Kashmirian School ; from the curtness of the canonical sūtras to the verbose abundance of the *Vaipulyasūtra*[4] ; from the bas-reliefs of Barhut to the Greaco-Buddhist statues of Gandhāra[5] ; and from the Magadhan sect of the first few centuries to the universal religion of the epoch of Kanishka.

NOTES

1. Watters thinks "Without Straw" or "Without Ricestraw" would properly express the sense of the Chinese word *Wu-tao-kan* (*On Yuan Chwang* Vol. I, London 1904, p. 229). *Translator.*

2. Sāṇavasī is no other than the apostle of Mathurā,—the Śāṇavāsa of the Sanskrit texts. According to the *Aśokāvadāna,* he lived on the Urumunda mountain. In the Pāli *Chullavagga* the name of this hill is given as Ahogaṅga. The hermitage of Śāṇavāsa must have been situated in the country of the Śūrasenas between the Ganges and the Yamunā.

3. According to the northern Buddhist tradition the Council held during the reign of Kanishka was the third in the series because the northern Buddhists do not recognise the Council that is said to have assembled at Pāṭaliputra in the time of the Maurya emperor Aśoka, though perhaps they are not absolutely unaware of the tradition regarding it (cf. *Vinayapiṭakam* ed. H. Oldenberg, Vol I, Willams and Norgate, London and Edinburgh, 1879, Introduction p. xxxii). Late Pāli texts of Theravāda Buddhism however refer very consistently to the Council of Pāṭaliputra (cf. *Dīpavaṃsa* V, 55-59; VII, 37-59, ed. Oldenberg, London, 1879, pp. 38, 52-53; *Mahāvaṃsa* Chapter V, ed. W. Geiger. P.T.S. London, 1908, pp. 28-55; *Mahābodhivaṃsa* ed. S. A. Strong P. T. S. London, 1891, pp. 110-17; Buddhaghosha's *Samantapāsādikā* on the *Vinayapiṭaka* ed. J. Takakusu and M. Nagai, Vol. I, P. T. S. London, 1924, pp. 60-69). In view of the uniform testimony of later Theravāda tradition, it would be a little too sweeping to deny the historicity of the Council of Pāṭaliputra altogether. Kern may possibly be right in his view that this was no general Council but "a party-meeting of the Theravādas and Vibhajyavādins as it was held after the schism of the Mahāsāṁghikas, the men of the Mahāsaṁgīti" (*Manual of Indian Buddhism* Strassburg, 1896, p. 110). E. J. Thomas also seems to think that the Pāṭaliputra gathering was a congress rather than a

Council (*The History of Buddhist Thought* London, 1951, p. 36). A full-fledged Council or a party congress, if it is taken into account as perhaps it must be, Kanishka's Council would stand fourth in the order of enumeration.-*Translator.*

4. Burnouf has already distinguished three categories of sūtras : (1) those in which the events alluded to, are contemporaneous with the Buddha ; (2) those where the events are posterior to him ; (3) the sūtras of the 'great development' (*vaipulya*). With his usual insight, the savant precisely marked out the *Aśokāvadāna*, as a type of the sūtras of the second category.

5. Vogel characterises the Mathurā School of Sculpture "as a direct descendant of the ancient art of Barhut and Sāñchi developed under the Graeco-Buddhist School of the N. W." (*Annual Report, Archaeol. Survey of India* 1909-10, p. 78). The School of Sāñchi did not die out to be reborn later at Mathurā. Such a marvel would be inexplicable. It is necessary to presuppose a continuous development of the art of the Madhyadeśa which planted itself early at Mathurā and produced new fruits there thanks to the strong western influences. The artistic evolution had thus a course analogous to that of religious history. (On the western influences in the formation of the *Aśokāvadāna*, see *infra* 'The "Hell" of Aśoka'—Chapter VI.)

CHAPTER I

RECENSIONS OF THE AŚOKĀVADĀNA

The *Aśokāvadāna* has been introduced into China during two epochs and by two different routes. The Parthian *Fa-k'in* first translated it into Chinese near about 300 A. D. Afterwards in 512 A, D. a Śramana of Fu-nan, *Seng-k'ia-p'o-lo* (Saṃghabhara ?) translated a different recension. The text must have become rapidly popular in China, for as early as 516 A. D. the compilers of the *King-lin-i-siang* had inserted several fragments of it in their work.

Of the life of the Parthian *Fa-ki'n* we know almost nothing. The Chinese catalogues of the Tripiṭaka merely inform us that between 281 and 306 he translated at Lo-yang five Buddhist texts three of which had been already lost by 730.

Seng-k'ia-po-lo was also called *Saṃghavarman* a name translated into Chinese as "Assembly-Armour." The restoration *Saṃghapāla* for the transcription *Seng-k'ia-po-lo* (Chinese translation : "Assemblv-Raising")..... is doubtful (Nanijo *Catalogue* Appendix II No. 102). In fact *p'o* is generally transcribed as *va*, *ba* or *bha* and it is better to restore with Sylvain Lêvi a form like *Saṃghabhara* or *Saṃghabhaṭa* (*Le catalogue géographique des Yaksha* in J. A. 1915 I p. 26).

There is a brief notice of this personage in the *Kao-seng-chuan* (*Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XXXV, 2, p. 19a). His biography appears in a more elaborate form in the *Siu-kao-seng-chuan* (*ibid*. p. 85a ; cf. also *K'ai-yuan-che-kiao-lu*, in *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tok. XXXVIII, 4, p. 53).

Saṃghabhara was a monk polyglot hailing from Fu-nan. Coming to learn that the Ts'i dynasty (479-501) favoured Buddhism, he came to China on board a junk and settled down in Nanking at the monastery *Cheng-kuan*. The *Siu-kao-seng-chuan* and the *K'ai-yuan-che-kiao-lu* say that he had Guṇabhadra as his teacher ; but if it is a fact that Saṃghabhara was born in 460 and Guṇabhadra died in 468, it is difficult to admit that the former had been a pupil of the latter (P. Pelliot *Le*

Fou-nan B.E.F.E.O. III p. 285). From 506 Emperor Wu of the Leang dynasty engaged Saṃghabhara for the next seventeen years to translate Buddhist texts along with other scholars. Saṃghabhara thus produced eleven books in Chinese comprising forty-eight chapters, of which one was the *A-yu-wang-king*. It is said that Emperor Wu came in person to write down the sacred texts under his dictation. He was loaded with presents and died in 524.

The two Chinese translations of the *Aśokāvadāna* can be definitely identified. All the catalogues agree in assigning to the Parthian Fa-k'in the *A-yu-wang-chuan* in seven chapters of which we have given a complete French version hereafter[1]. But the title and divisions of the work are varied. It has been divided sometimes into seven chapters, sometimes into five. It has been entitled in turn *A-yu-wang-king* and *A-yu-wang-chuan*. Without taking into consideration these divergences, we shall always refer to it by its current title *A-yu-wang-chuan*, abridged into A. W. Ch.

From an examination of the different catalogues it becomes further clear that the *A-yu-wang-king* in ten chapters is the work of Saṃghabhara *alias* Saṃghavarman. According to the *Nei-tien-lu* this monk had also translated an *A-yu-wang chuan* in five chapters, but this assertion is contradicted by the *K'ai-yuan-che-kiao-lu* (Tok. XXXVIII, 4, p. 53a). At all events the *A-yu-wang-chuan* of Saṃghabhara if it had ever existed, has long since disappeared[2]. We shall reserve for the known translation of Saṃghabhara its traditional title *A-yu-wang-king* abridged into A.W,K.

The content of the *Aśokāvadāna* is therefore known to us from two Chinese versions that may probably be considered complete viz. : the *A-yu-wang-chuan* and the *A-yu-wang-king*. Besides, long fragments have been incorporated in the Sanskrit *Divyāvadāna* and in the *Tsa-a-han-king*[3]. Those fragments are extracted from two lost recensions which differed from each other and which also deviated to some extent from the *A-yu-wang-king* and the *A-yu-wang-chuan*. Consequently we possess in whole or in part four recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* and whoever intends to trace the work back to its origin, must depend upon the entire set of these documents.

The fragments preserved in the *Divyāvadāna* and known through the translation made of them by Burnouf, are very close to the corresponding chapters of the *A-yu-wang-king*. As a contrast the *A-yu-wang-chuan* is notably different from all the known recensions ; it contains pieces which are not met with elsewhere and for that reason I have felt it necessary to translate the work completly.

It is well-known that as long as they remained in use Indian texts went through a perpetual process of growth. The writers, even the most obscure ones, did not feel any scruple to retouch and remodel the books of their predecessors. In these circumstances, in case a particular narrative presents certain traits manifestly recent, one has not the right to conclude, that the entire book is of the same date. For example, the word *dīnāra* (latin *denarius*) appears twice in the legend of Aśoka in the *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell and Neil p. 427, 13 and p. 434, 12). One would be wrong in drawing from this, arguments in favour of the supposition that the original *Aśokāvadāna* has been composed only after the introduction of the Roman *denarius* into India. Huber has shown that some stories are met with again, together and in the same form, in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* of Aśvaghosha and in chapters of the *Divyāvadāna* devoted to the legend of Aśoka (B.E.F.E.O. Tome IV 1904, pp. 709-726). This possibly shows that the recension of the *Aśokāvadāna* incorporated in *Divyāvadāna* has been recast after the redacation of the *Sūtrālakṃāra* ; but it leaves unsolved the entire problem of the date of the *Aśokāvadāna*.*

Finally we may consider as recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* some late works, that are simple exercises in rhetoric, where the narrators take pleasure in developing by the side of other stories, the old legends of the Aśoka-cycle. Such is the Sanskrit *Aśokāvadānamālā* of which the opening chapters are simply a verisfied amplification of the *Aśokāvadāna*. According to the testimony of Burnouf, this voluminous comiplation, "which is a sort of Purāṇa, adds little to what the legends of the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Avadānaśataka* inform us"* (*Introduction a l'histoire de Bouddhisme Indien* p. 358). The first

six *avadānas* there succeed one another in the following order :

(1) Upagupta-Aśokarāja
(2) Upagupta
(3) Aśokadamana
(4) Aśokanripati-pāṃśupradāna
(5) Kuṇāla
(6) Vītāśoka

Next comes a series of stories narrated by Upagupta to his disciple King Aśoka (Cf. Rajendralala Mitra *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* pp. 6-17 ; Bendall *Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Mss.* pp. 110, 114 ; M.S. d'Oldenbourg announced in 1894 in *Buddiiskiia Legendui* Part I, 1894 p. 6, a study on the *Aśokāvadānamalā* which does not seem to have been published[4]).

On the whole, the work can be said to have been analogous to the *Divyāvadāna* with this difference that the latter is a collection formed of legends simply placed side by side without any unity ; while in the *Aśokāvadānamālā* the lives of Aśoka and Upagupta constitute the basic framework the other stories just fitting into it. In this respect the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Asokāvadānamālā* are nearly in the same relation to each other as the *Avadānaśataka* and the *Kalpadrumāvadāna.* Most of the stories of the *Avadānaśataka* relate events contemporaneous with Śākyamuni, in which he either plays the hero or as such imparts his teaching ; only the hundredth narrative entitled "The Council" takes us to the times of Aśoka and Upagupta. In the *Kalpadrumāvadāna* which is probably very late, the story entitled "The Council" becomes the first of the collection and it introduces a succeeding series of tales that again bring Aśoka and Upagupta into the scene. In a parallel manner the majority of the *avadānas* in the *Divyāvadāna* narrates facts contemporaneous with the Buddha. Chapters XXVI-XXIX concerning Aśoka are an exception and it is precisely these stories which, written in verse, form the beginning of the *Aśokāvadānamālā* and constitute its central theme. Of little value as to its content because it merely reproduces the legends that we possess elsewhere in very old redactions, the *Aśokāvadānamālā* is not for that reason negligible with regard

to its composition. It marks the climax of a process of evolution which tended to make Aśoka and Upagupta two principal figures of a cycle where a great number of legends came ultimately to range themselves.

NOTES

1. This consists of Part II of the author's work which I have not included in the present translation.—*Translator.*

2. The *Nei-tien-lu* knew also another *A-yu-wang-chuan* earlier than that of Saghaṃbhara which had been translated under the Wei dynasty (Tok. XXVIII, 1, p. 71b). It may be that the *A-yu-wang-chuan* of the Wei period and that of Saṃghabhara are only remodelled editions of Fa-k'in's version. In fact we know that the last work has undergone transformations, since the catalogues attribute to it sometimes seven chapters, sometimes five (Cf. Tok. XXXVIII, 2, p. 49a Col. 6 and p. 54a Col. 8 ; XXXVIII, 3, p. 64a Col. 9 and p. 74a Col. 14 ; XXXVIII, 4, p. 18a), and give it different titles like *A-yu-wang-king, A-yu-wang-chuan, Ta-a-yu-wang king, Ta-a-yu wang-chuan.*

3. The *Tsa-a-han-king* (Nanijo No. 544) is the Chinese translation of a *Saṃyuktāgama* the original of which is lost. This translation was made between 435 and 468 by Śramaṇa Guṇabhadra who belonged to Central India.

4. Oldenbourg's intention to prepare a translation of the *Aśokāvadānamālā* the manuscript of which is now being preserved in the Manuscript Department of the Leningrad Institute of the Peoples of Asia of the U. S, S. R. Academy of Sciences, had not been realised. Soviet Indologists G. M. Bongard-Levin and O. F. Volkova have been working for several years on this manuscript. Cf. G. M, Bongard-Levin and O. F. Volkova, *The Legend of Kuṇāla* (*Kuṇālāvadāna* from the unpublished Manuscript of the *Aśokāvadānamāla*) Oriental Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1963 (XXXVI International Congress of Orientalists). The book includes : 1) Foreward (including a section in English); 2) Transcription of the text in Roman script (sheet pp, 90V-105V); 3) Commentary on the text ; 4) Russian translation ; 5) Notes to the translation ; 6) an article ; and 7) Phototype edition of a part of the manuscript (sheet pp. 90V-105V). For a review of the

book, see J. W. de Jong *Indo-Iranian Journal s' Gravenhage* Vol. 8, No. 3, 1965 pp. 211-25. I owe these informations and references to the kindness of Mr. Dimitrij Berthels, Chief of Archiv of Orientalists, Institute of the Peoples of Asia, Leningrad.—*Translator.*

CHAPTER II

THE STORY OF THE FIRST COUNCIL IN THE AŚOKĀVADĀNA

Ignoring the last two chapters of the *A-yu-wang- chuan* which are clearly late additions, we may divide this book, as well as the *A-yu wang-king*, into two principal sections viz. the chronicle of the Maurya dynasty and the history of the Buddhist Church from the death of Śākyamuni down to the the time of the Patriarch Dhītika. What constitutes the unity of the work is the fact that even the political events there are always considered from the point of view of the Buddhist Church. It is therefore preferable to begin the detailed examination of the *Aśokāvadāna* with a discussion of purely religious history.

After the entry of Śākyamuni into Parinirvāṇa, two orders of events influence powerfully the development of Buddhism in its early stages viz. the Councils and what may be called the Patriarchate. The majority of the sects recognised the validity of the first two Councils of Rājagriha and Vaiśālī. Although the *Aśokāvadāna* brings us at least down to the fall of the Mauryas, it does not mention the second of these assemblies. Such omission is frequent in the Chronicles of the Church. One may classify the works that deal with the Councils in the following manner : those that know only one of them, those that speak of two of them and finally those that recount a third. The *Aśokāvadāna*, the *Sūtra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka)* (see infra p. 31), the *Ta-che-tu-luen*, etc. belong to the first group. The second group comprises the V. M. S., the Pāli *Chullavagga* and generally speaking all the known Vinayas.

This classification is not without interest. The *Aśokāvadāna* and the other works of the first group are sūtras that form part of the Abhidharmapiṭaka which is but an extension and a development of the Basket of Sūtras (*Sūtrapiṭaka*). The works of the second group are treatises on Discipline (*Vinaya*).

The first Council was assembled for codifying the Dharma and the Vinaya, while the object of the second was chiefly to specify certain points of discipline (*Vinaya*). One understands the authors of the Sūtra to have been but little anxious to give an account of the Council of Vaiśālī while the doctors of Discipline (Vinaya) could not pass it over in silence.

It is well-known that from an indetermined epoch there had been doctors of the Dharma and doctors of the Vinaya. This specialisation pertained less to individual aptitudes than to the manifest preferences shown by certain groups to one or other of those sections of the Canon. Hiuan T'sang makes allusion to brotherhoods of this sort when he observes that at Mathurā "those who study the Abhidharma make offerings to Sāriputra ; those who devote themselves to meditation (*samādhi*), to Mudgalaputra ; those who read and preserve the Sūtras, to Purṇamaitrāyaṇīputra ; those who apply themselves to the Vinaya, to Upāli." (*Si-yu-ki* L. IV, Kingdom of Mathurā, cf. Trans. Stan. Julien II p. 209)[1]. The division of the Canon into three Baskets (*piṭakas*) cannot be traced back to the earliest phase of Buddhism. The author of the narrative of the premier Council in the Pāli *Chullavagga* also remembers a time when the doctrine was formed of two essential elements, the Dharma and the Vinaya[2]. It is probable that certain schools had been early attracted more strongly towards the one or the other of these elements. After all, the question was one of the relative efficacy of knowledge and action as means of obtaining Deliverance. I have drawn the attention of scholars elsewhere in connection with the history of Ānanda, to the controversy leadi g to a quarrel between the *śīladharas* and the *bahuśrutas*. The first group believed in the attainment of salvation through the observation of the prohibitions (*śīla*), and the other from an understanding of the significance of the Verb used in the expression "that which has been heard" (*śruta*). Their discord was only an aspect of the controversies over the question of the relative superiority of the Dharma and the Vinaya, or further, over that of the excellence of the Arhat, the perfect saint, as opposed to Ānanda the first of the *bahuśrutas*. (See *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funeralles du Buddha* II in the J. A. 1918, II pp. 452-54).

A passage drawn from the *Aśokāvadāna* enables us to specify the attitude of its author towards these great problems. Two bhikshus (*mahallaka*) discuss the question of the *bahuśruta* and that of the observation of the prohibitions(*śīlas*). They state the following definitions : 'A bhikshu who does not transgress the minor prohibitions, is called "vanquisher of prohibitions" (*jitaśīla* ?). He who has heard everything and who has heard without any falsification (of the truth), is called '(One who has) heard much" (*bahuśruta*). Śāṇavāsa hears them and reprimands them. The definitions that he gives, contrary to those of the bhikshus, are quite original : 'He who has the absolutely pure insight (dṛiṣṭi), is said to maintain the prohibitions in all their purity (*śuddhaśīladhara*).. He who acts according to that which he has heard, is called "(one who has) heard much" (*bahuśruta*)' (A. W. Ch p. 16b). These formulae of Śāṇavāsa amounted to nothing but the abolition of the distinction posed by the Vinayists, the detractors of Ānanda. The Vinayists strove to set against the *bahuśruta*, the Arhat, the accomplished saint, the strict observer of the prohibitions. Śāṇavāsa on the contrary endeavours here to make no distinction between the two notions. In less scholastic language his discourse comes to mean : "He who knows the truth acts well and reciprocally he who acts well, is a *bahuśruta*. Ānanda, the first of the *bahuśrutas* is therefore at once the patron of the Sages and the Saints, of those who know and of those who observe the prohibitions in all their purity. His detractors are in the wrong in decrying his knowledge as well as his conduct." In the mouth of Śāṇavāsa, the apostle of Mathurā and the founder of the Naṭa-Bhaṭa monastery, this thesis is significant. It shows that originally the faithful of Mathurā were ardent defenders of Ānanda and that they did not admit the superioty of Discipline (*Vinaya*) over Dharma. It is possible to uphold this conclusion on the basis of other facts.

In the narrative of the *Aśokāvadāna* as in that of the V.M S. the work of the First Council consists of putting together the three Baskets (*piṭaka*) of the Scriptures : first the Sūtrapiṭaka is recited by Ānanda, then the Vinaya, by Upāli and the Mātrikā by Mahākāśyapa. According to the Pāli *Chullavagga* the Dhamma and the Vinaya had been recited by Ānanda and

Upāli, but the order of the recitation is the reverse of what we find in the two preceding works: Mahākassapa had first permitted Upāli to speak and he had interrogated Ānanda afterwards. It is all the more strange that in the same text, according to the ancient usage, the whole of the doctrine is denoted by the expression "the Dhamma and the Vinaya" and not "the Vinaya and the Dhamma". In giving precedence to Upāli over Ānanda, the redactor of the Pāli *Chullavagga* or a late compiler has only expressed his desire to indicate the excellence of the Vinaya, which in other respects appears consistent with the general tendencies of the Sthaviravādins[3]. The Mūla-Sarvāstivādins on the contrary recognise the preeminence of the Sūtras over the Vinaya and that of Ānanda over Upāli[4].

Without deviating from the subject of the Sarvāstivādin School, it may further be observed that during the Mathurā phase devotion to Ānanda was probably more fervent than during the Kashmirian period. The narrative of the journey of the Buddha to the west has been preserved for us in two redactions of different ages; according to the *Aśokāvadāna* which gives an ancient version, the Buddha went to Mathurā first, and then to Kashmir accompanied by Ānanda. During the Kashmirian epoch this story was resumed and developed by the compiler of the V. M. S. who seeks to improve it by pushing Ānanda aside almost completely and substituting him by the yaksha Vajrapāṇi. It appears that the Sarvāstivādins themselves had finally come to assent to the opinion of the Sthaviras in things concerning Ānanda.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* this disciple (of the Buddha) is still the object of a singular veneration. When Aśoka guided by the venerable Upagupta makes his pilgrimage to the sacred places as well as to the tombs of the great disciples (of the Buddha) he visits successively the stūpas of Śāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Mahākāśyapa, Vakkula and Ānanda. In honour of each of the first three he offers hundred thousand *suvarṇas*. At the tomb of Vakkula he makes only a scoffing gift. But at the stūpa of Ānanda he gives away ten million *suvarṇas* thus honouring him more than all the others. This last offering is all the more remarkable as the king had donated only hundred

thousand *suvarṇas* at each of the pre-eminently sacred places, viz : the Lumbini Park, the Bodhi Tree, the Deer Park (Sārnāth) and the place of the Parinirvāṇa (Kuśinagara). The story of Aśoka's pilgrimage proves that the cult of Ānanda was one of the essential traits of the Buddhism of Mathurā during the period when the *Aśokāvadāna* was composed.

Buddhist literature contains numerous accounts of the Council of Rājagriha. Suzuki has collected and analysed a dozen of them and his list is not complete[5]. These different redactions do not permit themselves to be traced back to a unique type. These differ much over the relative importance and arrangement of their constituent elements as well as over the details of the episodes. But while it is difficult to classify them according to their contents, it is not so with regard to the form. In this respect one may distinguish the stories written entirely or almost entirely in prose and others where sections in verse on the contrary occupy a large place. To the first category belong the account of the Pāli *Chullavagga* and the corresponding chapters of the Vinayas of the Dharmaguptas, the Mahīśāsakas, etc. To the second belong the Sūtra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) and the narrative of the *Ta-che-tu-luen*. Transition from one to the other of these extreme types, is definitely indicated by those redactions in which the gāthās are more or less numerous.

How much importance would it be proper to accord to this formal distinction ? It is well-known that a certain number of texts in the ancient literature of India originally consisted of a framework of verse wrapped up by a few shreds of prose. With the times, the parts in prose were developed and modified while the versified structure degenerated slowly and disappeared little by little. If it could be proved that the chronicle of the First Council had followed an analogous line of evolution, fragments like the Sutra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) or the account of the *Ta-che-tu-luen* would possibibly have the chance to represent at least partially, a very ancient stage in the development of the tradition. Besides in comparing the stanzas of the narrative of the Council in the *Aśokāvadāna* to the gāthās of the most ancient accounts, one could measure to some extent the difference between those

two stages of the evolution by the definite signs of wear and tear contained in the most enduring sections of the theme.

As a starting point of this enquiry one would select a text containing a large number of gāthās and after having isolated them one should scrutinise if these form a coherent whole and whether the notion implied by them is more archaic than that which stands out prominently in the entire text.

One may pause over the question of the choice of the narrative that will furnish the stanzas. These are numerous in the *Ta-che-tu-luen* and the Sutra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripaṭaka)[6] but although the parallel series of gāthās present in these two works extremely striking analogies, these yet offer a very large number of variants due no doubt to the alterations undergone by the texts during their transmission. Which narrative must serve as the basis of our study ? We are inclined to prefer the Sutra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) and our choice is determined by the following reasons :

1. The *Ta-che-tu-luen* is a *śāstra,* that is to say, a didactic work, attributed to Nāgārjuna. By the side of decidedly old sections, it contains a commentary much more recent. The Sūtra on Kāṣyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) begins with the usual formula of the sūtras : "Thus have I heard", and does not include any didactic development.

2. The Sutra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) was translated into Chinese towards 150 A. D. by the Parthian *Che-Kao,*[7] that is to say, two centuries earlier than the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra.* Of all the accounts of the First Council contained in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, it is the earliest on record. A document that has attained fixed shape since the second century, has a considerable importance particularly if analysis permits us to distinguish in it a versified nucleus anterior to the prose account.

Here is the summary exposition of the principal events according to the complete sutra inclusive of the parts in prose :

The Arhats saddened by the disappearance of the Buddha entered in a body into Parinirvāṇa. Exhorted by the gods, the great Kāśyapa then formed the design of collecting the sacred texts. He assembled the Saṁgha and refused the disciples permission to attain Nirvāṇa before having brought together

the Sacred Texts. Then they went to Rājagriha and were seated in that city as members of a body of five hundred.

Anuruddha surveyed the company and found that an elder named Gavāmpati who resided on top of Sirīsa trees, had not come to the assembly. A young bhikshu named Pūrṇa was entrusted with the task of summoning him. He went to Gavāmpati and invited him to descend to the ground. The elder demanded to know the reason that made his presence necessary and he learned that the Buddha has entered into Nirvāṇa. Profoundly grieved, he also entered the same state in his turn. His body caught fire spontaneously and from the celestial depths spouted forth four springs of pure water from which emanated several Gāthās. Pūrṇa returned to Rājagriha

Anurudda contemplated afresh, if any one from out of the five hundred still retained the bonds of passion, anger and ignorance. He noticed that Ānanda had not yet attained the state of perfection. Mahākāśyapa orderd Ānanda to retire. The latter protested humbly by urging that he had not infringed the 'prohibitions'. But Kāśyapa overwhelmed him by reproaching him for a long while with all his weaknesses. Ānanda wept. Kāśyapa remained unmoved. Anuruddha intervened without success in favour of the accused. Ānanda was obliged to leave. Afterwards, thanks to the exhortations of the disciple Vrijiputra, he acquired the quality of an Arhat.

Purified of all blemishes, he presented himself before the Assembly. He was received with a hearty welcome and was invited to recite the sacred texts. He sat on the pulpit, obtained the illumination of a Buddha and recited the Sūtra of the Wheel of the Law.

On hearing him speak, the Arhats descended from their seats and bewailed the power of impermanence that had deprived them of the (company of the) Buddha. Kāśyapa lamented in his turn. Ajñāta Kauṇḍinya having testified to the correctness of the words of Ānanda, the Baskets (*piṭakas*) of the Sūtras, the Discipline (Vinaya) and the Abhidharma were collected. The devas glorified Ānanda and Kāśyapa exalted the Law.

If one separates the metrical parts of this text retaining only

the indispensable links between the stanzas, one obtains the following rough outline :

1. The Arhats pronounced these gāthās :

We have jumped over the abyss where there are the ignorant persons and the ocean of passions which it is difficult to cross. We have triumphed over gross and decrepit old age and destroyed the wheel of transmigration. We have comprehended (the nature of) attachments of all sorts. The body is like the slough of the serpent.

It is necessary for us to attain Nirvāṇa, (which is the state of) pure consciousness, like a lamp which is extinguished.

2. Then the devas recited these gāthās :

Propagate the sayings of the Venerable One, without any hindrance so that these may remain imprinted in human minds for a long time. Now that he has entered into repose, the Buddha bestows peace by destroying all impurities. That which is necessary for the guidance of the Assembly, is ecstasy, detachment and wisdom. Suddenly the gloom of ignorance thickens. The radiance of the Law disappears.

3. Kāśyapa recited the following stanza :

There need not be any urgency to quit this life for (attaining) Nirvāṇa before one can establish the cannon embodying the supreme Sense (*artha*). Sons of the Buddha who is in the state of perfect respose, you must bring together the sacred texts (*king*).

4. Then the multitude of Saints recited this gāthā (concerning Ānanda) :

In this harmonious assembly, he knows the doctrine of the Buddha like the palm of his hand. The Daśabala has praised him in these terms : "He upholds the wisdom in all its purity".

5. Then Kāśyapa recited the following gāthās :

There, where the Sirīsa trees are planted in large number and where numerous flowers sparkle in riotous splendour,—return thou, down there in all haste like the bee that plunders fragrant perfumes. It is the habitation preferred by Gavāmpati who is gifted with supernatural insight (*abhijñā*). Obeying faithfully the instructions of the Assembly, bring home to him these our intentions : "Mahākāśyapa and the

others united in the Assembly, charge me to tell you that the affairs of the *Saṃgha* are being regulated there. Make haste to come so that you may arrive in time.'.

6. Then Pūrṇa recited these gāthās :

Kāśyapa whose character is marked by calmness and excellence, who takes delight in ecstasy, detachment and concord and whose intentions are pure, as also the other venerable ones who have the supernatural powers of subjugation (*vaśitā*), invite you. Getting together they apply themselves to the affairs of the *Saṃgha* and they exalt the Buddha who is beyond measure. As they desire that the convocation should be complete, descend for visiting the supreme assembly.

7. Then Gavāmpati recited the following gāthā :

The world is a desert. In the absence of the Buddha there is no longer anything that is agreeable. What advantage shall Jambudvīpa have by retaining me? I proceed forthwith to enter Nirvāṇa.

8. Four watr-falls appeared after the nirvāṇa of Gavāmpati. The first said :

The sage when he is in the saṃsāra must not put his trust on floating clouds. Impermanence, that deadly thunderbolt, has made even the Buddha, the king of the mountains, to collapse.

9. The second waterfall said :

The beings agitated constantly by inquietitude, (worldly) effort and misfortune, can neither acquire the supernatural powers of subjugation nor give up their ego. The Buddha procures the peace of Nirvāṇa.

10. The third water-fall said :

Thus, shunning carelessness, he has attained perfection by his acts. Tormented by innumerable calamities, he resembles a lighted lamp, which is quickly extinguished.

11. The fourth water-fall said :

The most excellent ones in the assembly must prostrate themselves before him. This venerable Gavāmpati, who has reached the stage of Nirvāṇa, has said : "I love to accompany the Buddha who has the ten powers. I wish to enter in his train into Nirvāṇa. Thus the young one of the elephant with six tusks, follows its mother respectfully. By inclining the

head I salute the Blessed Saints who are all assembled down there. May the venerable and sublime Saṁgha excuse me!"

12. Back to the Assembly, Pūrṇa recited these gāthās :

Having learnt that the most venerable of mankind, the great Compassionate One was in repose, Gavāmpati immediately entered into Nirvāṇa. He said : "By inclining the head, I salute the Blessed Saints who are all assembled down there. May the venerable and sublime Saṃgha excuse me." Having pronounced these words he has entered into Nirvāṇa.

13. Kāśyapa recited the following gāthās :

When the Buddha who is no more, was present as the "Universally Honoured One," wheresoever he went, he was the leader. For all that exists, as well as for the human race, the efficacy of the Law has not disappeared with him. In this world the savour of ambrosia subsists for those men who are absolutely wise. The Buddha has definitely attained the calm state of extinction and that is why his teaching operates marvellously.

14. Ānanda (or Kāśyapa ?) recited this stanza :

The triumphant multitude of Bhikshus, deprived of the merits of the Buddha, has neither the prestige nor glamour any more just like space deprived of sun-light.

15. Mshākāśyapa, addressing himself to Ānanda, recited this gatha :

Great sage ! I desire that thou wouldst say this. Child of the One who rests in peace, tell us at which place a text of the sūtra has been recited for the first time by the Blessed One.

16. Then Ānanda recited this stanza :

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha found himself at Vārānasī in the Park of the Stags of the Saint Rishi ; he recited in full the Sūtra of the Wheel of the Law.

17. Then the sincere persons recited these gāthās :

Alas ! the three worlds are confounded and confused like the image of the moon in water. They resemble false illusions. They are without force like the leaves of the banana-tree. Even the Buddha who has no equal in the three worlds, whose merits are entirely pure, must have an end, and that a sudden one, like a surging wind.

18. Then Mahākāśyapa recited the following gāthās :

The ignorant persons are not protected ; the sages are not taken care of ; liberated or unliberted, there is no being who does not end in death. The magical formulas are not of any help. One cannot have recourse to gross artifices. In this world death is the common law just as sea-water is (everywhere) bitter.

19. Then the devas eulogised Ānanda in these terms :

The foremost in the Assembly is Ānanda. Moved by compassion for human beings he indicates the regulations and collects the accurate texts of the Law. In his task of perfect compilation, Śākyamuni guides him well. For the future as well as for the present he has made him obtain the highest of ecstasies.

20. Finally the venerable Mahākāśyapa recited these stanzas :

The books of the Law which has been established through compasssion for all human beings, those instructions of the Daśabala, are now brought together and they are beyond all measure. The perverted views that were in the world as well as the glooms of sentiment, are dispelled (by the Law). Its lustre travels far and wide like that of a great lamp lighted during night.

Ignoring now the context in prose one may summarily relate the sequence of events emerging from the gāthās :

The disciples form the design of entering into Nirvāṇa. The devas being anxious that the Law should not disappear, exhort the disciples to propagate the utterances of the Buddha. Kāśyapa forbids them to enter into Nirvāṇa before having laid the foundation of the canon embodying the Sense (*artha*) and having collected the sacred texts. Then the multitude of saints sings the eulogy of Ānanda who knows the doctrine "like the palm of his hand".

Kāśyapa orders Purṇa to go and summon Gavāmpati. Pūrṇa repeats to the latter the words of Kāśyapa. But Gavāmpati replies that he would proceed to enter into Nirvāṇa. From the space spring forth four fountains of water that murmur a number of gāthās. Purṇa returns to the Assembly and reports all that he has seen.

Kāśyapa declares that the Law has not disppeared with the

Buddha. The teaching of the Master continues to operate. He exhorts Ānanda "the great sage" to recite the first sutra. Ānanda repeats the Dharmachakrapravartanasutra. While listening to the words of the Master, the Elders bewail the impermanence of all things. Kāśyapa laments in his turn. Afterwards the devas utter the eulogy of Ānanda who brings together the texts of the Law and Kāśyapa compares it to a beacon-light that destroys the glooms of ignorance.

It is probable that this long series of stanzas has not come down to us without alterations. By the side of the gāthās pertaining to the traditional substratum the subsequent writers are likely to have interpolated supplementary stanzas calculated to embellish the narrative. It is impossible to distinguish these ornaments of superfluity, except by a delicate analysis, detailed criticism being still more difficult as we have but drawn upon a Chinese translation in place of the original text.

Be that as at may, without examining anew the value of each gāthā taken apart, we must henceforth recognise that the twenty stanzas of the Sutra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) form a coherent and perfectly interlinked whole. One can pass from the one to the other without the connecting thread being ever broken. The events that those relate are far better and more tightly linked together than in the prose narrative. How does one reconcile the premier summary based on the complete sūtra and the restored outline according to the metrical portion? The latter by itself admits of unity of time and action. The disciples are about to disappear; the Law is in fear of being destroyed along with them. Kāśyapa assembles them. All are summoned including the distant Gavāmpati who refrains from coming to the assembly. Ānanda is requested to repeat the sacred sayings; he recites the premier sutra and afterwards the subsequent ones. Thanks to him the doctrine remains safe; (there is assurance that) it would continue to shine in the world. To this strongly framed simple story are opposed the adventures narrated in the prose text. An early reunion of the Saṃgha is held at an undetermined spot, without doubt somewhere in the country of the Mallas. Afterwards the Arhats betake themselves to Rājagriha. After the episode of Gavāmpati, the trial and exclusion of

Ānanda form a long digression. One waits for Ānanda to raise himself to the dignity of an Arhat and it is only in a third reunion that the recitation of the sacred texts takes place. The gāthās know only of one reunion of the Saṃgha ; the prose narrative distinguishes at least three of them.

Had the stanzas been composed at the same time as the prose text, or subsequently for enriching it, or for the purpose of emphasising certain passages, these would never have constituted so coherent a whole. Separated from the context, these would in that case be, without doubt, hardly intelligible. At all events they would not have permitted us to restore a connected and very much bare account of the Council. The author of the Sutra or the poet who embellished it, had not failed to lay emphasis on the tragic situations. What is (for example) more touching or more dramatic than the trial of the humiliated Ānanda, scoffed at and expelled inspite of his tears ? The prose-writer dilates on the theme ; but the metrical stanzas are conspicuous by their absence in the whole of this scene.

Besides, the text of the sutra presents some incoherences ; on diverse points the prose narrative contradicts the gāthās :

(a) In the beginning thousands of Arhats muster round Mahākāśyapa. Those who arrive afterwards in Rājagriha are not more than five hundred (in number). Finally when Ānanda returns to their midst, they are innumerable, hundreds of thousands. Those variations are the work of the prose writer. The author of the gāthās has never stated the number of the Saints assembled in the Council.

(b) Glorified at first in stanza 4, Ānanda is subsequently treated with disdain ; then his eulogy recommences from stanza 19. The gāthās only bestow praise on Ānanda's address. The indictment pronounced by Mahākāśyapa against him, is written entirely in prose.

(c) The same inconsistency characterises the titles used with regard to the sacred texts. Sometimes the prose text distinguishes two baskets (*piṭaka*), the Dharma and the Vinaya ; sometimes it specifies three of them viz. the Sutra, the Discipline (Vinaya) and the Abhidharma. The metrical stanzas on the contrary denote by a single word the entire body

of sacred texts, this being either *king* (sūtra ?) or the Sense (*artha*).

It seems that our gāthās go back to an epoch during which the detractors of Ānanda had not yet set up against him the bill of indictment, which reappears in different forms in all the subsequent accounts of the Council. In those distant days he was to everybody the "great sage", the confidant of the Master, against whom none had the courage to raise his voice. The doctrine of the Buddha was at that time an indivisible whole which Ānanda alone knew thoroughly and which, it was supposed, he had been charged to expound in full before the members of the Council. As yet none had thought of associating Upāli with him for the recitation of the teachings on Discipline (Vinaya) or of separating the Dharma from the Vinaya; still less had one the audacity to set the two saints, as well as those elements of the doctrine against each other.

One is thus led to suppose that the gāthās of the Sūtra on Kāṣyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) had attained fixed shape before the prose text, as it was the case with certain Vedic hymns as well as a large number of Jātakas. The acceptance of this hypothesis at once explains the continuity of the stanzas and the simplicity of the versified structure; it renders account of certain existing contradictions between the prose narrative and the verses and also other peculiarities such as the absence of the gāthās in the episode of the Trial of Ānanda.

The stanzas that constituted the framework of the old accounts of the Council, ceased, ere long, to agree with the new tendencies of the Church. Afterwards they disappeared more or less rapidly following the rise of different sects and schools. As they extolled before everything else the recitation of the Sacred Sayings by the "great sage" Ānanda, they had been preserved in some sūtras, but eliminated from the major portion of the Vinaya. Moreover it would be convenient in this context to compare the mutually opposed outlooks of the Sarvāstivādins and the Sthaviras. Those who had early distinguished themselves by their hostility to Ānanda, could not tolerate the stanzas which were contradictory to their principle. Thus Khandhaka XI of the Pāli *Chullavagga* is

completely devoid of gāthās. The Sarvāstivādins, on the contrary, among whom the cult of Ānanda remained in force down to a sufficiently late period, had preserved for a long time the ancient stanzas. It is interesting to compare in this respect the account of the First Council in the *Aśokāvadāna* and the V. M. S. . For facility of exposition the texts shall be designated by means of the following abbreviations : Sūtra on Kāśyapā's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka) =S. K. C. ; *A-yu-wang-king* =A. W. K ; *A-yu-wang-chuan*=A. W. Ch ; Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins=V. M. S.

First Strophe

S. K. C.—The Arhats pronounced these stanzas :

We have jumped across the abyss where there are the ignorant persons and the ocean of passions which it is difficult to cross. We have destroyed the gross and decrepit old age as well as the wheel of transmigration. We have comprehended (the nature of) attachments of all sorts. The body is l ke the slough of a serpent. It is necessary for us to enter into Nirvāṇa (which is the state of) pure consciousness, like a lamp which is extinguished.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the same theme is developed by the Buddha, an instant before his attainment of Nirvāṇa, in the beginning of the account of the Council.

A. W. K.—I have now succeeded in crossing the bottomless ocean of births and deaths of which the deep and swelling waters whirl and of which old age and disease are the shores. I proceed to enter the kingdom where there is never any sorrow and to cast off the body (which is) the raft. Transmigration is an occean of which formidable old age is the water. The muni is the king of the bulls. He has crossed this ocean of births and deaths like a man seated on a raft and, peaceful, he lands on the other bank.

A. W. Ch.—The beings are all in a whirlpool. Birth and old age resmble the waves (of the ocean). Having crossed the ocean of death, I give up my body as one abandons a raft. I escape the terror of the *makaras*. The three kinds of existences are an ocean deep and vast ; the master of deliverance has been able to cross it.

Strophe 2—Only a part of this strophe is found in the *Aśokāvadāna.*

S. K. C.—Suddenly ignorance thickens its gloom; the radiance of the Law disappears.

A. W. K.—Ignorance with its gloom covers the lamp of the true Law.

A. W. Ch —The lamp of the law is extinguished; the great night comes.

In the three texts these words are attributed to the Devas.

Strophe 3.

S. K. C.—It is not necessary to quit life for Nirvāṇa, before having composed the Canon embodying the Supreme Sense (*artha*). Sons of the Buddha who is in prefect repose, you must bring together the Scriptures.

A. W. K.—From this day forward, let the whole of the Saṃgha remain united. None can enter into Nirvāṇa before having made the collection of the Law.

The A. W. K. has not preseved any of the characteristic expressions of the S. K. C. and has reported the injuction of Kāśyapa after the episode of Gavāmpati.

Strophe 4.

S. K. C.—In this harmonious assembly he (Ānanda) knows the doctrine of the Buddha like the palm of his hand. The Daśabala has praised him in these terms: "He upholds the wisdom in its purity."

A W. K.—The ayusmat Āanand has received and (he) preserves the sayings of the Buddha. Thanks to his advantageous groundings, he possesses wisdom. He has constantly followed the footsteps of the Buddha. Possessed of a pure heart, he explains the Law of the Buddha. We must honour him. He has made the Saṁgha thrive and he has been praised for it by the Daśabala.

This strophe of the A. W. K. and the corresponding prose passage in the A, W. Ch. are paraphrases of the gāthā of the S. K. C.

Strophe 5.

Contrary to what happens in the preceding strophe, the 5th one of the S. K. C. is an amplification of the corresponding gāthā of the A. W. K.

A. W. K.—Kāśyapa says to Pūrṇa : Virtuous young man, it is necessary to go to the Sirīṣa forest. Leave this Assembly and go thou down there where Gavāmpati dwells.

S. K C.—Go thou there, where the Sirīṣa trees are planted in large number and where numerous flowers sparkle in riotous splendour, in all haste like the bee that pillages sweet perfumes. That is the habitation preferred by Gavāmpati.

Strophe 7.

S. K, C.—The world is a desert. In the absencc of the Buddha, there is no longer anything that is agreeable. What benefit shall Jambudvīpa secure for me ? I proceed forthwith to enter into Nirvāṇa.

A. W. K.—The universe is a desert. It is no longer a pleasant dwelling place. Without the Law that the Tathāgata preached, of what importance is Jambudvīpa ? I desire now to remain here and enter into Nirvāṇa.

Strophes 8—12

The S. K. C. notes the song of the four springs of water. The fourth one says :

S. K. C. - 11—The most excellent ones in the Assembly must prostrate themselves before him. The venerable Gavāmpati, who has attained Nirvāṇa, has said : "I like to accompany the Buddha who has the ten forces. I desire to enter into Nirvāṇa in his train. Thus the young one of the elephant with six tusks respectfully follows its mother. By inclining my head I salute the Blessed Saints who are all assembled down there. May the venerable and sublime Saṃgha excuse me.

Then Pūrṇa returns to the Council and says pretty nearly the same thing.

S. K. C.—12—...Gavāmpati immediately entered into Nirvāṇa. He said, "By inclining my head I salute the

Blessed Saints who are assembled down there. May the venerable and sublime Saṃgha excuse me !"

As against these five strophes the *Aśokāvadāna* has only one. It makes no allusion to the song of the waterfalls and attributes to Pūrṇa the following words :

A. W. K.—Oh supreme assembly of venerable ones! Gavāmpati prostrates himself respectfully before you and says : "The Buddha is extinguished. I proceed myself to enter this day into Nirvāṇa. When the great elephant disappears, its young one likewise disappears in its train.

The V. M. S. knows the song of the four celestial sources (of water) ; but the gāthās murmured by the first three differ totally from those of the S.K. C. Only the song of the fourth one is analogous in the S. K. C. and the V. M. S.

V. M. S.—Now I bow my head before the disciples of the Buddha who have fully realised what they have to do Imitating respectfully the Great Master I enter into perfect repose. Thus when the king of the bulls departs, the young calf follows him.

On the whole, the song of the first three sources (of water) is missing in the *Aśokāvadāna* and does not present any common element in the S. K. C. and the V. M. S. It is probably a subsequent embellishment of the ancient gāthās. The song of the fourth spring is found simultaneously in the S. K. C. and the *Aśokāvadāna*, where it is placed in the mouth of Pūrṇa, and in the V. M. S. where the simile of the elephant is replaced by that of the bull. This stanza belongs undoubtedly to the primitive stratum. One may suppose that originally a single mass of water was represented to have fallen from the sky[8], and announced the Nirvāṇa of Gavāmpati. Later the single waterfall was divided into four and further, the Nirvāṇa of Gavāmpati was made to be announced through Pūrṇa. These innovations explain the disagreement among the three strophes out of four in the S. K. C. and the V. M. S. and also the fact that in the S. K C. the 12th strophe is pretty nearly the repetition of the 11th.

The primitive redaction, just as we propose to restore it, has been preserved in the *Ta-che-tu-luen*. In this work the Nirvāṇa of Gavāmpati is announced by the celestial

waters that fall in a single mass and utter the following strophe :

Gavāmpati salutes by inclining the head, the Saṃgha of the Revered ones, the marvellous and supreme assembly. Having heard of the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha (he says) : "I set out after him. Thus when the great elephant departs, the young one follows it."

Strophe 14

S. K. C.—The triumphant multitude of bhikshus, deprived of the merits of the Buddha, has no longer either prestige or brilliance just like space deprived of sun-light.

A. W. K.—In that assembly of happy augury, deprived of the Blessed One alone, the pure hearts are without their (principal) ornament like space deprived of moon-light.

A. W. Ch.—In the absence of the Buddha the path that the bikshus follow, is devoid of its (principal) ornament. They are like the multitude of stars when the moon is no longer there. Likewise in the Saṃgha there is only ugliness and meanness in the absence of the Buddha.

The corresponding stanza of the *Ta-che-tu-luen* compares the Buddha not to the sun but to the moon, as in the *Aśokāvadāna* :

When the moon is no longer in the space, the stars are without beauty just in the same way as the multitude of the Respectable Ones, deprived of the Buddha, has lost its prestige and efficacy.

Strophe 15

Kāśyapa addresses himself to Ānanda :

S. K. C.—Great sage ! I desire that you would say this ! Offspring of Him who dwells in peace, tell us in which place the text of a sutra has been recited by the Blessed One for the first time.

A. W. K.—Great sage ! We beseech you. Offspring of the Buddha, it behoves you to tell us in what place the Buddha has recited the first sutra.

The corresponding strophe of the V. M. S. is instructive though very different, because it manifests clearly the bias of the authors of the Vinaya against Ānanda :

> Oh ayusmat, it is now necessary for you to expound the sayings of the Buddha. Among all the dharmas the most elevated ones are those pronounced by the great master ; these can fully lead to the prosperity of creatures.

The title "Great Sage" is replaced here by a banal epithet, *ayusmat*, which expresses merely a wish for longevity. Further according to a strophe of the A. W. K. cited earlier, Ānanda is the one "that promotes the prosperity of the Saṃgha". This opinion is contradicted by the authors of the V. M. S. In their opinion, it is the dharma pronounced by the Buddha that has led to the prosperity of creatures.

Strophe 17

> S. K. C.—Alas ! the three worlds are confounded and confused like the image of the moon in water. They resemble misleading illusions. These are without force like the leaf of the banana-tree. He who has no equal in the three worlds, whose merits are entirely pure, the Buddha (too) must have an end, and that a sudden one, like the surging wind.
>
> A. W. K.—The three spheres of existence are without stability. These are like the image of the moon in water, like false appearances and like the banana-tree ; while Wisdom is powerful. By means of it one can discern what is there in the world and thus escape transmigration and enter into Nirvāṇa, like a tree turned upside down by a great wind.
>
> A. W. Ch.—Ah ! the beings are unhappy. They are unstable and flitting like the water and the moon. Like the banana-tree they are wanting in solidity. They resemble the misleading shadow and (empty) noise. The Tathāgata is extremely powerful. By his merits he puts an end to the three sphers of existence. He is like an uncertain wind that wanders here and there without rest.

Strophe 18.

The theme of impermanence is developed in detail in the S. K. C. The V. M. S. resumes it without any particular emphasis.

S. K. C.—Ignorant persons are not protected ; sages are not taken care of. (Be it) those who have attained deliverance or those who have not, there is no being who does not end in death.

V. M. S.—Alas ! in this world impermaence does neither choose nor discriminate.

Strophe 20.

S. K. C.—The texts of the Law which has been established through compassion for human beings,—those instructions of the Daśabala, are now brought together and these are beyond all measure. The perverted views which were in the world as well as the glooms of the spirit are disintegrated (by the Law). Its radiance shines far and wide like a great lamp lighted during night.

A W. K.—We have completed the collection of the dharmas, the sacred texts; for the prosperity of the world. The sayings of the Buddha Daśabala are a thing that go beyond all measure. The lamp of the Law can destroy the darkness of ignorance in the world.

A. W. Ch.—The wheel of this venerable Law succours the diverse categories of creatures. We must with all zeal receive and put into practice the sayings of the Blessed One. This Law is a shining light. It destroys the dark gloom and the veils of ignorance. It helps the spirit and never allows it to stray.

V. M. S.—Oh Blessed Ones ! the doctrine of the King of the Law which we have collected, is wholly inspired by a sentiment of compassion for all creatures. The words which he has uttered are beyond all measure. Here we have compiled them fully without any omission. In the world ignorance is powerless ; the lamp producing brightness, destroys the gloom that bars the view.

The following results emerge from a comparison of these stanzas :

1. The *A-yu-wang-king* reproduces a large number of primitive gāthās. Where the A.W.K. and the S.K.C. are not in agreement, it is not always certain that the latter had preserved the ancient redaction. In many cases (e.g. in Strophes 5 and 14) the readings furnished by the A.W.K, are probably preferable.

2. The ancient metrical structure is very much altered in the *A-yu-wang-chuan*. Many of the gāthās retained in the A.W.K. no longer appear distinctly in the A.W.Ch : many are merged in the prose portion where a few *pādas* still survive ; the others have completely disappeared.

3. In the V.M.S, the ancient stanzas are almost entirely obliterated. One meets with a few of their remains here and there ; only the twentieth strophe is well preserved.

In short, the sheaf of gāthās, around which the stories of the Council are affixed, has disappeared slowly in the works of the Sarvāstivādin School. During the Mathurā phase the *Aśokāvadāna* still preserved important vestiges of them. Afterwards the primitive system continued to disintegrate. Nothing remained of them beyond the fragments in the *A-yu wang-chuan ;* this work, as will be seen later, has undergone rehandling during the time of the invasions and (also) during the Kashmirian period. Finally in the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins the ancient strophes disappear almost completely under the late prose layers and a new efflorescence of the gāthā.

NOTES

1. Watters has called in question without reason, the accuracy of the information given by the Chinese pilgrim. He goes to the extent of saying that Śāriputra "had nothing to do with the Abhidharma" (On *Yuan Chwang's Travels in India* I p. 303). This assertion is, to say the least, incautious. One reads in fact in the *Ta-che-tu-luen* : "Some people say : when the Buddha was in this world, Śāriputra composed the Abhidharma in order to explain the sayings of the Buddha. Later the followers of T'ou-tze (*Vatsaputra*) recited (that work)". And so on ......upto : "This is what is called to-day the Abhidharma of Śāriputra" (Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo XX, 1, p 17b).

The passage of the *Si-yu-ki* cited earlier enables one to distinguish the Abhidharmists, the Vinayists, the Sūtrists etc. That each of these groups had chosen such or such portion (of the Sacred Literature) is only a practice of secondary importance, which could vary according to places and epochs. However this much is certain that members of the same sect or fraternity devoted themselves in preference to the study of the same part of the Canon. The same fact had moreover been pointed out by Fa-hien more than two centuries before Hiuan-Tsang (Fa-Hien Trans. Legge pp. 44—46).

2. Cf. *Chullavagga* XI. i. 1, 7-8 (Oldenberg ed. *Vinayapiṭakam* Vol. II, London, 1880 pp. 285, 286-287). This is also the division alluded to in the Pāli *Mahāparinibbānasutta* (VI. i) : *Yo kho Ānanda mayā dhammo cha vinayo cha desito paññatto so bo mamachchayena satthāṭi.* The celebrated commentator Buddhaghosha also points out clearly : *sabbameba chetaṃ dhammo cheva vinayo chāti saṃkhaṃ gachchati. Tattha vinayapiṭakaṃ vinayo avsasesaṃ Buddhavachanaṃ dhammo.—* *Sumaṅgalavilāsini* ed. T. W. Rhys Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter Part I, P.T.S. London 1886, p. 16.—*Translator.*

3. One of the characteristics of the Pāli Canon, is the rank unfavourable prejudice against Ānanda that manifests itself on

many occasions (see for example *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha* I J. A. 1918, I, p. 529, and II J. A. 1918 II, p. 434) But Ānanda is in the opinion of of the Sthaviras themselves "the first of the *bahuśrutas*".

4. In the *Che-song-liu* which is the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins or to be more precise, of a sect sprung from the primitive Sarvāstivādin group and which retained its name, Upāli first recites the Vinaya, then Ānanda narrates the Dharma and the Abhidharma before the Elders of the Council. On this point the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins reproduces a tradition more archaic than that which reflects itself in the narrative of the *Che-song-liu*.

5. See Suzuki, *The First Buddhist Councils* in *The Monist* XIV, 2. The most important lacuna of this paper is the omission of the narrative inserted in the *Che-song-liu*.

6. For French translations of the accounts of the First Council respectively in the *Kia yeh-kie-king* (Sūtra on Kāśyapa's Collection of the Tripiṭaka) and the *Ta-che-tu-luen*, see J. Przyluski *Le Concile de Rājagriha* Paris, 1926, pp. 3-20, 57-75 —*Translator*.

7. The title of the Chinese translation of the work is *Kia yeh-kie-king*. B Nanijo restores it in English as 'Sūtra on Kāśyapa's Collection (of the Tripiṭaka)' (*Kāśyapaparivartasūtra*) (*Catalogue* No. 1363). He is followed by Dr. P. C. Bagchi (*Le Canon Bouddhique en Chine* Tome I, Paris 1927, pp. 26-27). I have preferred that restoration to the author's 'Le Sūtra de la Recension de Kāśyapa' (The Sutra of the Recension of Kāśyapa) because of the familiarity of the former to Indian readers. The abbreviation on page 40 above has accordingly been changed from S. R. K. to S. K. C —*Translator.*

8. This is a supernatural event which is seen frequently to accompany the entry of an arhat into Nirvāṇa while the miracle of the four water-sprouts is absolutely unique.

CHAPTER III

THE PATRIARCHS

According to the *Aśokāvadāna*, Śākyamuni had, before his Nirvāṇa, entrusted Mahākāśyapa with the task of looking after his doctrine. Kāśyapa had afterwards transmitted the Law to Ānanda; and thus from patriarch to patriarch, it continued down to the Venerable Dhītika. Does this testimony conform to the reality of facts? There are serious reasons to doubt it.

Kern has shown in his History of Buddhism[1] that the lists of patriarchs contradict one another. The Singhalese traditions and those that have been collected in the works translated into Chinese and Tibetan, do not present any common element in this matter. Besides the southern lists do not mention any of the savants who, according to the Pāli *Chullavagga*, occupied an eminent place in the Church at the time of the Council of Vaiśālī. For these and other reasons Kern suspects on good grounds the lists of the patriarchs and regards these as apocryphal.

One may go further; it is doubtful that at any time after the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha authority of a single savant had been recognised by all the Buddhists together. This happens to throw doubt on the very existence of the patriarchate. The fact that the lists of the diverse sects differ almost on all points, tends to prove that no savant was ever able to make his authority accepted by the entire Church. Besides, it becomes clear from the accounts of the Councils that the decisions of the assemblies were not always universally respected. The unruly attitude of Purāṇa after the First Council (*Chullavagga* XI, 1, 11) and the schism of the Mahāsaṃghikas[2] are definite indications of this. If the decisions of the Councils were not observed everywhere, what chance was there that the voice of a single saint would be listened to in the whole of the Church?

According to the authors of a number of sacred texts, the disciple to whom the Buddha entrusted the custody of his Law was Kāśyapa ; according to others it was Upāli. Now, the ancient Parinirvāṇasūtras do not make any allusion to this event. During his last interviews with Ānanda, the Buddha is never made to say that he has transmitted the Law to any of his disciples. If there is any one among them who appears to have been called up to receive this custodianship, it is likely to have been Ānanda, for he remains the confidant of the Buddha to the end, while Mahākāśyapa appears only at the funeral ceremonies and Upāli is not named even once in the old accounts of the death of the Master.

It may perhaps be argued that the Northern and Southern Schools know an entirely unbroken chain of saints going back to the Buddha, and the accord of the sects on the question of the basic principle of the institution proves in a certain measure the existence of the Patriarchate. This argument however is a weak one. It is easy to understand that during a certain epoch when the Church had already been divided into rival sects, each school should have preserved the memory of the savants who had particularly rendered it illustrious. In order to perpetuate the prestige of these Fathers, their custom of choosing the specially venerable masters was introduced. It was pretended, without fear of the anachronisms involved, that they had been instructed by the first batch of the disciples of the Buddha and that, in this way, they had received from the great Master the mandate of guardianship of the Law as well as of the propagation of the doctrine. In other words, the authors of the sacred texts provided their saints with a fictitious genealogy ; they tried to find for them great spiritual ancestors in the manner of the epic poets who attribute divine or legendary ancestors to the heroes. For the Buddhists of western India, Śāṇavāsa and Madhyāntika were the disciples of Ānanda who himself had succeeded Mahākāśyapa and the Buddha. Likewise the author of the Chronicle of Aśoka inserted in the *Aśokāvadāna*, shows the great king, whom he desires to exalt, as having descended in the direct line from Ajātaśatru, the contemporary of the Buddha.

This hypothesis, which still appears vague, will be specifically outlined through what now follows. From now on, at any rate, we gain two points : the lists of the patriarchs are of doubtful authenticity and the very existence of the institution of patricarchate is anything but proved. Need we satisfy ourselves with these negative results ? Even legendary traditions have their origin partly in actual events and partly in the subjective attitudes of their authors. It is essential that investigations be made as to how and why these come to grow up. It is important to ascertain that a particular sect had taken for its patrons such and such saints. This act of selection may be of help to put into relief the real tendencies of the important rival communities, viz. the Sthaviras, the Sarvāstivādins, the Mahāsāṃghikas, etc.

Kern limits himself to comparing the Ceylonese series of patriarchs with those mentioned in several other documents all of which he describes by a single expression, 'Northern Sources'. It is possible to specify the provenance of the sources, called Northern, and to furnish certain new elements of comparison.

According to works written in Pāli, five or six patriarchs succeeded one another since the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha down to the conversion of Ceylon. These are : Upāli, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava and Chandavajji, Tissa Moggaliputta (cf. *Dīpavaṃsa*, IV, 46 and V, 57.—*Suttavibhaṅga*, I, p. 292 omits Chandavajji)[3]. The series continues after the conversion of Ceylon.

The Vinaya of the Mahāsāṃghikas contains a list of patriarchs which has not yet been taken notice of and which it is interesting to campare with the corresponding Pāli texts. It will suffice to reproduce here the names of the first five savants[4] : Yeou-po-li (Upāli)'; T'o-so-p'o-lo[5] (Dāsabala) ; Chou-t'i t'o-so[6] (Jyotidarśa ?) ; K'i-to (Jita ?)[7], Sense-Protected (Indriyarakshita ?) etc....(cf. Tripiṭaka, ed. Tokyo XV, 10, p. 35a).

It is possible that Dāsaka and Dāsabala denote the same individual. However from the third saint downward the Sthavira and the Mahāsāṃghika lists cease to be parallel. It is proper to place opposite them, the following one drawn from the *Aśokāvadāna* : Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Śāṇavāsa and Madhyāntika, Upagupta and Dhītika. These three series are

clearly independent ones. The third comprises only six names while the first two are much longer.

Here is now the list from the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins : Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Śāṇika and Madhyāntika, Upagupta, Dhītika, Krishna and Sudarśana (Cf. *Le Nord-Ouest de l'Inde* J. A. 1914, II, pp. 522 ff.). The compilers of this Vinaya have reproduced the list of the *Aśokāvadāna*, and in order to lay it open, have added two names, Krishna and Sudarśana. This new fact tends to confirm our view on the antiquity of the *Aśokāvadāna*, in comparison to the V.M.S. The mention of the last-named saint is all the more significant as, in the chronicle of Tāranātha,—the conversion of Kanishka is attributed to a monk named Sudarśana (cf. Tāranātha, *History* trans. Schiefner p. 58). It is well known that the V. M. S. contains a prediction relating to Kanishka (cf. Sylvain Lévi *T'oung Pao* 1907 p. 115). According to Tāranātha the Dul-va was put into writing during the time of Kanishka (Tāranātha *Ibid* p. 61). All these data naturally lead one to conclude that the V.M.S, had been written during the Kashmirian period about the time of Kanishka.

The *Fu-fa-tsang-yin-yuen-king* (Nanijo No. 1340) enumerates twenty-three patriarchs of which the earliest are: Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Śāṇavāsa, Upagupta, Dhītika and others. This work is allied to the *Aśokāvadāna* and the V. M. S. It belongs undoubtedly to the Sarvāstivādin group. Thus one comes across three series of patriarchs of unequal length so far as this sect is concerned ; but common parts of these are exactly superposable with the exception that the last-mentioned text misses at the end, one link in the chain i e., Madhyāntika.

It is therefore possible to substitute the unnatural divison of our sources into southern and northern, by one, more exact : there are on the one hand the Sarvāstivādins according to whom the first two patriarchs are Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda, and on the other the Sthaviras and the Mahāsāṃghikas who commence their enumeration with Upāli and Dāsaka (=Dāsabala ?).

It appears that some sects make use of the name of Upāli while others place themselves under the patronage of Ānanda. It has already been observed and it is a fact of great importance, that each of these disciples (of the Buddha) had a competence

of his own. At the First Council Ānanda recites the Sūtra and Upāli, the Vinaya; the former is the first of "those who have heard a great deal" (*bahuśruta*), and the latter is the first of "those who maintain the prohibitions" (*śīla*). When the Sthaviras and the Mahāsaṁghikas prepared their lists of patriarchs, Vinayisit influences were sufficiently powerful among these two groups to hold back Ānanda and push Upāli to the front rank. As a set off, Ānanda was an object of singular veneration to the faithful of Mathurā when the *Aśokāvadāna* came to be written, and he is consequently found to hold a high place among the spritual ancestors of Śāṇavāsa and Upagupta. Thus fixed, the tradition henceforth thrust itself upon the writers of the Sarvāstivādin School. When the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins was compiled its authors inspite of their subsequent bias against Ānanda, reproduced wholly the list of the *Aśokāvadāna*.

The brevity of this last-mentionad list is alreday an indication of its antiquity in comparison to the much longer series of the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the Vinaya of the Mahāsaṁghikas; there are also other indications of its archaic character. It has already been observed that in the oldest Parinirvāṇasūtras Ānanda is the sole confidant of the Master till the end, while Upāli is not even mentioned. It becomes clear that Ānanda was orginally the most qualified among the disciples of the Buddha for repeating the sacred sayings and transmitting the doctrine to the future generations. All the accounts of the First Council, inclusive of the statements of the Sthaviras and the Mahāsaṁghikas, name Kāśyapa and not Upāli, as the president or one of the presidents of this Assembly. A list of patriarchs comprising Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda must therefore be presumed as older than those where these names do not appear.

In the presence of contractictory opinions regarding the order of succession of the great saints, one is induced to prefer the Sarvāstivādin series which alone has preserved the names of Kāśyapa and Ānanda. It is now essential for us to enquire as to how this list took shape.

In the *Fu-fa-tsang-yin-yuen-king*, the patriarch who succceeds Ānanda, is Śāṇavasa. In the *Aśokāvadāna* and the Vinaya of

the Mula-Sarvāstivādins, Śāṇavāsa and Madhyāntika are both disciples of Ānanda and they receive from their master the charge of looking after the Law*. The order of succession in these three works may be represented in the following manner :

AŚOKĀVADĀNA & V. M. S | FU-FA-TSANG-YIN-YUEN-KING

ĀNANDA
ŚĀNAVASA — MADHYĀNTIKA
UPAGUPTA

ĀNANDA
ŚĀNAVĀSA
UPAGUPTA

What constitutes the only point of difference presented by the two diagrams ? Śāṇavāsa is the apostle of Mathurā ; Madhyāntika is the ascetic who had converted Kashmir. Both were extolled among the communities of the west and it had to be early acknowledged that they were the disciples of Ānanda. The latter in that case became the great patron of the entire Western Church. Upagupta being the immediate disciple of Śāṇvāsa, the spiritual family of Ānanda found itself constituted in this way :

ĀNANDA
ŚĀNAVĀSA — MADHYĀNTIKA
UPAGUPTA

The bifurcation of the genealogical line after Ānanda was an inconvenient complication. Not being able to separate the two monks of Naṭabhaṭa, Śāṇavāsa and Upagupta, the chroniclers were obliged to narrate the life of Madhyāntika before that of Śāṇavāsa It is precisely this that the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* has been obliged to do. His account does not conform to the chronological order, since the conversion of Madhyāntika is posterior to the entry of Śāṇavāsa into the faith. Later the compiler of the *Fu-fa-tsang-yin-yuen-king* set aside the difficulty by simply omitting ths name of the apostle of Kashmir. One catches here a glimpse of the process of arbitrary simplification to which the lists of patriarchs are due. Their authors

never sought to do the work of the historian. They intended above all to attach to the Buddha by an uninterrupted chain, the principal saints of their sect including the latest ones. That is why in their exposition, facts are arranged almost always in a purely linear lay-out

The *History* of Tāranātha is more complex and hence more instructive. The Tibetan chronicler who appears to have had access to diverse sources endeavours sometimes to notice the synchronism of events. According to him the first two patriarchs are Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda. Śāṇavāsika and Madhyāntika succeed them. Upagupta followed by Dhītika, comes afterwards. This is exactly the series of the Sarvāstivādin School. But at the same time when he is following the development of Buddhism in the west, Tāranātha does not lose sight of the eastern communities. He informs us that King Mahendra and his son Chamasa reigned in the country of Aparāntaka during the patriarchate of Upagupta, and during the same epoch Arhat Uttara lived in the east. The inhabitants of Bagala built the monastery of Kukkuṭārāma for the latter, and the greatest disciple of Uttara was the Arhat Yaśas (Tāranātha translated by Schiefner p. 18). These indications agree upto a certain point with the accounts of the Second Council. According to the V. M. S., at the time of the Council of Vaiśālī Yaśas had as his teacher Sarvakāma who himself was a disciple of Ānanda. During the same time the ascetic Uttara lived in the town of *Lieu-Chuan* (Śrughna) (cf. Tripiṭaka, ed. Tokyo XVII, 2, p. 96a, Col. 8 and 12). Among the influential monks who sat in the Council, the Pāli *Chullavagga* names Sabbakāmi (=Sarvakāma), Uttara, Saṇavāsī (=Śāṇavāsa) and Yasa (=Yaśas). These testimonies tend to prove that Madhyāntika at Kashmir, Śāṇavāsa and Upagupta at Mathurā, and Uttara, Sarvakāma and Yaśas in the east, were all personages, pretty nearly contemporary. But while in the Sarvāstivādin tradition, Madhyāntika, Śāṇavāsa, Sarvakāma and Uttara are the disciples of Ānanda, the Pāli Vinaya does not associate any of these names with the earliest of the *bahuśrutas* (Ānanda); this time also the Sthaviras have feigned to ignore Ānanda.

According to the majority of the accounts of the Second Council, Yaśas (=Yasa, son of Kākaṇḍaka), had played a

preponderant role in the events that ended in the condemnation of the monks of Vaiśālī. In the V. M, S. it is he who presides over the assembly of the seven hundred arhats. Why does he not figure in the list of patriarchs of the Sarvāstivādin group ? The motive behind this exclusion can be easily guessed. Yaśas has been eliminated because he belonged to the Eastern Church[9]. The list of patriarchs of the Sarvāstivādin School must have been formed at Mathurā during a time when the particularist tendencies of the Western Communities were already greatly emphasised. As the different sections of the *Aśokāvadāna* testify, endeavours were made at that time to exalt the local saints above the savants of Vṛiji and Magadha. With that end in view, it was proclaimed that the legitimate successors of the Buddha and Ānanda were by no means Uttara, Sarvakāma or Yaśas, but Śāṇavāsa, Madhyāntika and Upagupta.

Consequently a text preserved among the Sarvāstivādins and showing Yaśas as the head of the Universal Saṃgha, must be presumed to be more ancient than the *Aśokāvadāna* and also than our previous lists of patriarchs. Such is for example the story of the Second Council inserted in the V. M. S.[10] There one does not come across any trace of the western particularism that manifests itself in the later accounts ; the centre of gravity of the Church lies still in the east ; Vaiśālī is the metropolis of Buddhism and Yaśas presides over the Council. Also, as it had been composed during the Kashmirian period, the V. M. S. includes for that reason arachaic fragments anterior to the Mathurā phase and undoubtedly also to the very formation of the Sarvāstivādin group.

One may sum up the preceding indications, giving a survey in a combined table of the principal chiefs of the Church according to tradition, at the time of the first two Councils :

First Council — MAHĀKĀŚYAPA
| ĀNANDA

Second Council — MADHYĀNTIKA | ŚĀNAVĀSA | SARVAKĀMA & UTTARA

ŚĀNAVĀSA → UPAGUPTA (Western Church)

SARVAKĀMA & UTTARA → YAŚAS (Eastern Church)

For the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* who belonged to the Mathurā School and to the Sarvāstivādin group, and who must have been a near contemporary of Dhītika[11], the question was one of relating the spiritual genealogy of that saint in course of a process of glorification of the Western Church and particularly the Community of Mathurā. The writer therefore eliminated completely the heads of the Eastern Church ; and having retained only the saints of the west, he obtained the following series that appears to be the earliest of the lists of patriarchs actually known : Mahākāśyapa-Ānanda-Śāṇavāsa and Madhyāntika-Upagupta-Dhītika.

NOTES

1. Kern's great work *Geschiedenis van het Buddhisme in Indie* (Haarlem, 1882-84), is in Dutch. The author is apparently referring to Gédéon Huet's French translation *Histoire du Bouddhisme dans l'Inde* Tome II, Paris, 1903, pp. 290-304.—*Translator.*

2. According to some accounts this schism had been provoked by the monks of Vṛiji at the time of the Council of Vaiśālī (cf. *Dīpavaṃsa* V. 31-39). Other sources refer this event to the time of the Third Council held during the reign of Aśoka (cf. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels* I, p. 269).

3. In fact Upāli and Dāsaka are mentioned in *Dīpavaṃsa* IV, 27-28, 38, 41.—*Translator.*

4. The names are all quoted from the Chinese translation of the original text—*Translator.*

5. Variant in three Chinese editions : *po.*

6. Variant in three Chinese editions : *p'o.*

7. Probably it would be proper to add here the letter *ken*, which is the usual Chinese translation of sanskrit *indriya* and to restore the name as "Jitendriya"(?).

8. See *Le Nord-Ouest de l'Inde* J. A. 1914, II, pp. 531, 534, 549 and 552.

9. Yaśas who according to the earliest tradition lived in the Vṛiji country, is associated by the subsequent sources with different dwelling places. Regarding these variations, see Chapter IV.

10. Although they pretend to describe the same events, the narratives of the Second Council inserted in the V. M. S. and the Pāli *Chullavagga* have not been written at the same time ; consequently these present certain features

corresponding to different phases of religious history. For example, the account of the V. M. S. points to an epoch when the Western Communities were much less powerful than in the period during which the XIIth Khandhaka of the Pāli *Chullavagga* had been composed. See *supra* p. 15.

11. According to Tāranātha Dhītika was the son of a Brāhmhṇa of Ujjayini (*History* p. 22). According to the A. W. Ch. p. 34b, he appears to have been born at Mathurā.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEEDS OF AŚOKA

The *Aśokāvadāna* is formed of three diverse elements, viz, the account of the premier Council, the lives of patriarchs and the chronicle of the reign of Aśoka. The last-named section which is the most important, has given its name to the book. It constitutes nearly the whole of the first half of the *A-yu-wang-king*, more than a third of the *A-yu-wang-chuan* and the whole of the other recensions. We have placed our study of the legend of Aśoka after the survey of the lists of patriarchs because the formation of the latter helps us to understand the the development of the former.

The early chapters of the A.W.K. are arranged in the following order :

(1) Birth (of Aśoka).
(2) Interview with Upagupta.
(3) Offerings to the Bodhi Tree.
(4) Vītāśoka.
(5) Kuṇāla.
(6) Gift of half of the āmalaka.

In the A. W. Ch. the scheme of chapter-division is not much different :

(1) Gift of the Earth.
(2) Aśoka.
(3) Younger Brother of the King.
(4) Kuṇāla.
(5) Gift of half of the āmalaka.

The first chapter of the A.W.Ch. entitled "Gift of the Earth" has the same content as the first *avadāna* of the A W.K. Both recount the offering of the earth made to the Buddha by the future Aśoka, then the birth of the king, his youth and the grand episode of the infernal Prison. Under a single title, "Aśoka" the second chapter of the A.W.Ch. groups the second and third *avadānas* of the A.W.K. Finally the last three

chapters correspond to one another in the A.W.Ch. and the A.W.K.

In the *Divyāvadāna* the legend of Aśoka divides itself into four chapters :

XXVI Pāṃśupradāna or "the gift of the earth".
XXVII. Kuṇāla.
XXVIII. Vītāśoka;
XXIX. Aśoka.

The *Pāṃśurpradāna* obviously corresponds to the first chapter of the A.W.K. and the A.W.Ch. It was however preceded by the legend of Upagupta by way of introduction. Under the title of "Kuṇālāvadāna" the 27th chapter of the *Divyāvadāna* groups chapters II, III and V of the A.W.K., all these being preceded by the *avadāna* of the "Head of the Dead" which is the sixteenth tale of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* of Aśvaghosha. Chapters XXVIII and XXIX of the *Divyāvadāna* correspond respectively to chapters IV and VI of the A.W.K.

In the *Tsa-a-han-king* or *Saṃyuktāgama* translated into Chinese, the distribution of the topics is on quite unexpected lines. Chapter XXIII of this collection contains the beginnings of the Deeds of Aśoka. Inspite of the absence of sub-titles one can easily distinguish there :

(1) the Gift of the Earth p. 31a Col. 11 to 32a Col. 2 ;
(2) the youth of Aśoka p. 32a Col. 2 to 33b Col. 20 ;
(3) the episode of the infernal Prison along with those of the conversion of the king and the erection of 84000 stupas p. 32b Col. 20 to 34b Col. 3.

Although given in a summary form, all this is equivalent to chapter I of the A.W.K. and the A.W.Ch. Afterwards come :

(4) the interview of Aśoka with Upagupta p. 34b Col. 3 to 37b Col. 3 ;
(5) the offering to the Bodhi Tree p. 37b Col. 3 to 39a Col. 20.

At that point the story breaks off abruptly. Chapter XXIV of the *Tsa-a-han* consists wholly of very brief sūtras where there is no longer any reference to Aśoka. Chapter XXV opens with the account of the journey of the Buddha to Mathurā followed by a long prediction regarding the destruction of the

Buddhist Dharma. The same prophecy is met with again towards the end of the A.W.Ch. The narrative of the legend of Aśoka recommences in the *Tsa-a-han* under the sub-title, "King Aśoka gives away half of the āmalaka". It is the history of the last years of the King followed by a few indications regarding the reign of his successors including the cruel Pushyamitra, that is to say, the catalogue of the same events as in Chapter VI of the A.W.K.

In short, while the Deeds of Aśoka are composed in the same plan in the A.W.K, and the A.W.Ch., the two other recensions deviate from the normal course. Particularly in the *Tsa-a-han* the beginning and the end of the chronicle are separated by some heterogenous elements. There is scope for enquiry into the causes of this disorder before taking up the study of the composition of stories better arranged.

At the end of the A.W.Ch. are to be found, as appendix, a long prediction about the destruction of the Law and a series of stories including the *avadāna* of the "Head of the Dead" in a less developed from than in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*. It can be easily realised that in the late recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* the order of the topics may have been upset and some complementary narratives unknown to the original text, may have ultimately been incorporated into it. Thus an *avadāna* rendered celebrated by the genius of Aśvaghosha and having Aśoka as its hero, has easily found place in the chronicle of that King. In the same way the story of the "Head of the Dead" is reproduced in chapter XXVII of the *Divyāvadāna*, no longer under the simple form in which it appears in the A.W.Ch. but decorated with the ornaments in verse with which Aśvaghosha has embellished it. By an analogous process of transposition the prediction regarding the destruction of the Law, which terminates the A.W.Ch., is reported in the *Tsa-a-han* along with the chronicle of Aśoka.

It is less easy to explain for what reason long fragments of of the *Aśokāvadāna* have been inserted in the *Tsa-a-han*. Nevertheless an examination of the *Fen-pie-kong-to-luen* suggests an answer to this question. This work is a commentary on the first few chapters of the *Ekottarāgama*. It contains two stories borrowed from the legend of Aśoka and we have

given translations of these in Appendix II. The first is none other than the episode of the infernal Prison ; it concludes with this sentence : "This is the meaning of the expression : the attainment of Nirvāṇa by meditating on the body (*Kāyasmṛiti*)". The second fragmant is the story of the conversion of the younger brother of Aśoka ; it terminates with these words : "It is for this reason that it is said : the meditation of death leads also to Nirvāṇa". The two episodes are meant to illustrate the twofold truth that Nirvāṇa may be attained by meditating on the body as well as on death. One of the sections of the *Ekottarāgama* translated into Chinese is entitled *Ekamārgavarga* and the first sūtra of this is an exposition of the *smṛityupasthāna* or "objects of meditation". The example of the bhikshu Samudra shut up in a prison among burised and tortured human bodies and that of Vītāśoka condemned to death, have helped the commentator to illustrate this theory.

The *Ekottarāgama* is not the only canonical collection to deal with the "objects of meditation". The *Madhyamāgama* translated into Chinese, contains likewise a *Smṛityupasthānasūtra* (no. 98) to which corresponds the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* (no. 10.) occurring in the Pāli *Majjhima Nikāya*. The 22nd sutta of the Pāli *Digha Nikāya* is entitled *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna*. Finally in the *Samyuktāgama*, as in the *Ekottara*, the exposition of the "objects of meditation" finds place at the commencement of the *Mārgavarga*. Now, chapter XXIV of the *Tsa-a-han* coincides precisely with the opening section of the *Mārgavarga* ; it is devoted to the theory of *Smṛityupasthāna*. In inserting in that place long fragments of the *Aśokāvadān*, the compiler of the *Tsa-a-han* has probably followed the same suggestions as the author of the *Fen-pie-kong-to-luen*.

In other words, the examination of the last-named text proves that from a certain epoch the episodes of the legend of Aśoka had served to illustrate the theory of *Smṛityupasthana*. Chapter XXIV of the *Tsa-a-han* where this theory is expounded, is inserted in two long fragments of the *Aśokāvadānā* It may therefore be admitted that the author also intended to produce eminent examples in support of his abstract thesis. Undoubtedly it had sufficed to give a summary of the few episodes of the Deeds of Aśoka instead of reproducing in extenso

entire chapters of it. It is however well known that the Indian compilers do not hesitate to make their writings unnecessarily heavy. A simple allusion every now and then would carry them away beyond their subject and they would recover their track only after first straying into endless byways.

Having taken into account the circumstances which have modified the contents of the Deeds of Aśoka in the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Tsa-a-han*, we proceed to give here the concordance of the four recensions :

A-yu-wang-king	A-yu-wang-chuan	Divyāvadāna	Tsa-a-han-king[1]
1. Birth	Gift of the Earth	Pāṃśupradāna	Gift of the Earth
2. Interview with Upagupta	Aśoka	Kuṇāla	Interview with Upagupta
3. Offerings to the Bodhi Tree	Aśoka	Kuṇāla	Offerings to the Bodhi Tree
4. Vītāśoka	The younger brother of the Kiug	Vītāśoka	
5. Kuṇāla	Kuṇāla		
6. Gift of half of the Āmalaka	Gift of half of the Āmalaka	Aśoka	Gift of half of the Āmalaka

The order of the scenes is identical in the A. W. K. and the A. W. Ch. After a short introduction which deals with the "Gift of the Earth" made to the Buddha, these two recensions give the genealogy and the story of the youth of Aśoka. The life of the king and those of his near relations next unfold themselves in six principal episodes viz. the infernal Prison, the interview with Upagupta, the offerings to the Bodhi Tree, the conversion of the younger brother of the king, the story of his son Kuṇāla and the gift of half of the āmalaka. The whole narrative concludes with the enumeration of the successors of Aśoka and the persecution indulged in by Pushyamitra. The general plan has nothing artificial in it : it starts with the ancestors of the king, his birth and his youth ; at the end come his old age, his death and his successors. But the order of the episodes is sometimes arbitrary and could be convenienty modified as in the *Divyāvadāna*. The conformity

5

of the plan of the A. W. K. with that of the A. W. Ch. probably shows that the two recensions have reproduced faithfully the arrangement of the Deeds of Aśoka just as the original redactor had fixed it.

The founder of a great empire leaves in the popular mind a profound and durable impression. The legend of Aśoka which elaborated itself among the Buddhist communities, did not interest the clergy alone ; it was at least in fragments, undoubtedly a subject of universal remembrance. Received and transmitted by every group whatever, it thrust itself upon the narrators and besides it was not modified by any of them. When the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* took it into his head to serve the reputation of the great king as well as to raise the prestige of Upagupta, it was beyond his power to substitute an imaginary Aśoka for the picture that was in the fancy of his age. In case he was to furnish proof of his intiative by describing the pompous reception of the patriarch of Mathurā at the palace of Pāṭaliputra, he would have to endeavour to make this innovation acceptable by retracing faithfully the known features of the legend. But for a single episode which went deep into his heart viz. the interview of Aśoka with Upagupta, he appears to have reproduced the work of a previous writer.

To be convinced of this, it suffices to examine which holy personage is associated with the king in each section of the story. Whoever goes through any one of the recensions of the *Aśokavadāna*, cannot fail to observe the frequent recurrence of the same theme : it has been said several times that Aśoka went to the hermitage of Kukkuṭārāma to the Sthavira Yaśas. In the *Divyāvadāna* for example, this monastery is mentioned right from the beginning of the episode of the infernal Prison (p. 375).[3] Afterwards the king goes there in person to meet the Sthavira Yaśas (p. 381). He returns to the place before his interview with Upagupta (p. 384). After the pilgrimages to the holy places he summons the bhikshus of all the regions, and as the seat of the Ancient One (*Vriddhāsana*) remains unoccupied he asks for the reason of it. It is Yaśas who replies (p. 399). At this point is interpolated the account of the reception of Piṇḍola. After the account of the offerings made to the Bodhi Tree, a brief story in which two Śrāmaṇeras

appear, opens with a reflection of Yaśas (p. 404). In the beginning of the legend of Kuṇāla it is once again Yaśas who instructs the young prince in the Law (p. 406). And when Vītāśoka the younger brother of the king is converted, it is at Kukkuṭārāma that he enters into religious life (p. 423). In the avadāna of the "Gift of half of an āmalaka" there are constant references to that monastery and its abbot (Yaśas). Finally, when Pushyamitra attempts to destroy the Buddhist Dharma, he is miraculously put to flight the moment he approaches this hermitages with his troops (p. 434).

Thus Yaśas or his monastery appears in all the sections of the narrative. The other saints are brought by turns into communication with the great king e g. the bhikshu Samudra, Upagupta and Piṇḍola. But each of these personages are found to intervene only in one episode[8] while Yaśas is present everywhere. On the side of the laity it is the Chakravartin Aśoka who gives unity to the cycle of legends ; on the side of the clergy it is the abbot of Kukkuṭārāma. Wheresoever these two are united we come upon a framework in which successive episodes are inserted. This is why even in the episode comprising Upagupta, the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* avails himself of Yaśas for the purpose of introducing his heroes and welding the story of the Pilgrimage together with the general mass of legends.

The above statement agrees with what we already know. According to the story of the Second Council in the V. M. S. Yaśas presides over the assembly. Later when the Western Church came to be preponderant, the apostles of the west viz. Śāṇavāsa, Madhyāntika and Upagupta cast Yaśas into the background preventing him even from figuring in the rank of the patriarchs. Regarding this we have already reached the conclusion that the account of the Second Council inserted in the V. M. S. where Yaśas occupies the premier place, must be regarded as having been anterior to our earliest lists of patriarchs and, consequently also to the redaction of the *Aśokāvadāna*. Here the survey of the Deeds of Aśoka leads us to identical results. Two layers of tradition can be clearly distinguished in it : one, more ancient, where Yaśas is always in the front rank ; another, in which the fads of the Mathurā

School assert themselves and where Yaśas yields place to patriarch Upagupta. Our two constructions thus meet each other and support each other reciprocally.

In the account of the Second Council in the V. M. S. Yaśas is a monk belonging to the village of Vasava in the Vṛiji country. In the Aśoka-Story he is the abbot of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery in the neighbourhood of Pāṭaliputra. These vicssitudes have nothing unnatural in them in a country where, in the absence of truthful annals, the traditions of religious history were in a process of perpetual becoming. Vaiśālī had its hour of glory as the anicient *Parinivāṇasūtras* point out.[4] But already the same texts forecast the brilliant future of Pāṭaliputra.[5] When the Mauryas took their abode in this city they did not only build their palace and establish their services here. Aśoka after being converted to Buddhism attracted numerous monks to it. For political reasons the rich Kukkuṭārāma became one of the premier monasteries of the empire. Ever since then, the memory of Aśoka remained attached for a long time to the name of that hermitage. It was contrived to associate Yaśas with it as the latter was the president of the Second Council and one of the most celebrated saints of the Church since the death of Ānanda. This fiiction ingratiated itself easily; and thus came to be associated with the same cycle of legends—two personages of whom we cannot even affirm whether they lived in the same time or knew each other.

When Mathurā became a religious and intellectual centre in the Buddhist Church, it received from the more ancient communities great number of texts, canonical or purely legendary. Developed in diverse circumstances, these stories did not always agree with one another. For example, Yaśas was represented in them sometimes as an austere monk of the Vṛiji country, reformer of the Church on the occasion of the Council of Vaiśālī, and sometimes as a monk of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery, spiritual counseller of Chakravartin Aśoka. It has already been noticed that while composing his list of patriarchs, the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* had completely omitted Yaśas and the other saints of the east. As a contrast, the same writer, while narrating the life of Aśoka, bestows an important role on

Yaśas, recalls his name in each episode and avails himself of him for assuring the continuity of the story. What is responsible for this difference of treatment? It is probable that during the epoch when the *Aśokāvadāna* was composed, the traditions regarding the history of the Patriarchs remained uncertain and floating while the legend of Aśoka had already been crystallised. Besides the succession of the Patriarchs interested, chiefly the clergy. A writer could manage to introduce changes there without the simple laity zealously watching it. The legend of the great king on the contrary, had left profound impressions in the human heart; it was impossible to effect any abrupt transformation of it without raising protests.

However the Deeds of Aśoka had not attained absolute stability. An ingenious narrator could, without altering the foundation, introduce new scenes and to some extent, modify the list of the elders, This is what the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* appears to have done. He has imagined the episode of the meeting of Aśoka and Upagupta and has made them visit the sacred places together. However, besides being cleverly linked up with the story, this episode indicates that it is at least partly an innovation and manifests clearly the tendencies of its author. He glorifies Upagupta and exalts above all the other saints the same Ānanda who had been decried elsewhere, but for whom the people of Mathurā always nursed a particular tenderness. Here is a summary of it: Aśoka goes to the Kukkuṭārāma monastery and wants to know from the Sthavira (Yaśas) whether any second person had ever been the object of a prediction analogous to that which was made with regard to himself after the gift of a handful of earth. Yaśas in reply, refers to the journey of the Master to Mathurā and the prophecy regarding Upagupta. His discourse reproduces feature by feature, a fragment of the Avadāna of Upagupta (Chapter VI of the A. W. K. and A. W. Ch.). It was a clever stunt to put in the mouth of Yaśas, the eulogy of the saint of Mathurā. From the very beginning one can guess the place of origin of the author and understand his anxiety to bring Upagupta to equal footing with Chakravartin Aśoka.

Forthwith the king forms the design to go to Mathurā. But Upagupta forestalls his desire; the saint embarks with an escort of 18000 arhats and arrives at Pāṭaliputra. The King is speedily informed. Aśoka, beside himself with joy, takes off from his neck a precious collar of pearls and gives it to the man who had come to announce the news. The exaggeration in these details reveals once more the intentions and the temperament of the author.

Finally, guided by Upagupta, the king begins his pilgrimage. He visits the sacred places of Buddhism and deposits rich offerings on the stupas of the great disciples of the Buddha, specially on the stupa of Ānanda. Why did the king who came to erect 84000 stupas, thanks to the co-operation of Yaśas,—take to the road with Upagupta alone, without his usual counsellor? This feature is sufficient to indicate the influence of a new story-teller, who is a stranger to the original text. The pilgrimage of Aśoka, at least so far as it is narrated in the *Aśokāvadāna*, is neither by the same author nor does it belong to the same time, as that of the original framework of the legend. Likewise, in the account of the journey of the Buddha to the north-west of India, the choice of the companion of the Master enables us to distinguish two different layers of tradition: the one according to which the Buddha is followed by his usual companion Ānanda, and the other—a later one,—where the Kashmirian narrator has replaced Ānanda by Vajrapāṇi.

The episode which we are now going to analyse, can be divided into three scenes: a) the meeting of the king with Yaśas; b) the interview between the king and Upagupta; c) the pilgrimage to the holy places. The first scene partly and the second wholly,—are of obvious local inspiration; these have been devised by a narrator of Mathurā,—to be more exact,—by the author of the *Aśokāvadāna*. So far as the pilgrimage episode is concerned the question of origin however is much less clear. Undoubtedly it is once more the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* who has made the choice of Upagupta as the guide of the royal pilgrim. But the writer might have adapted an earlier story which narrates the same journey without the presence of Upagupta. A large number of facts would probably confirm the hypothesis.

If the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* had traced through his own proper initiative, the itinerary of the pilgrimage, he would not have failed to make Aśoka go west ; the example of the Buddha was of sufficient authority to him on that point. One could imagine the king going to render homage to the sanctuaries of Mathurā following the footprints of the great Master. Yet, in the *Aśokāvadāna* the last station of pilgrimage is Śrāvastī. The King it appears, made his offerings to the stūpas of the great disciples of the Buddha, not far from the Jetavana monastery. Were not there at Mathurā other stūpas which Aśoka could have visited ? It is true, Hiuen Tsang points to a large number of them, much later. But only three among them, according to the evidence of the Chinese pilgrim, had been erected by Aśoka, or in other words, were of an archaic form (Hiuan-Tsang *Memoirs* trans. Julien I p. 208). If the pilgrimage terminated at Śrāvastī, the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* while reproducing a story that had neglected western India, did not venture to introduce new modifications in it. Mathurā at that time, had not come to be a place of pilgrimage comparable to Śrāvastī ; and the writer had no desire to take the risk of being accused of imposture by changing too radically an episode that was possibly, either very well-known or conformed to the itinerary generally followed by the pilgrims.

Tāranātha in his *History*, summarises a version of the Aśoka-Story which is apparently later and independent of the *Aśokāvadāna*. Upagupta plays no part here. However, according to this narrative, after having loaded with favours a great assembly of Arhats, the king, carried on the shoulders of powerful Yakshas, had visited within seven days the *chaityas* of all the countries. The pilgrimage of Aśoka is not therefore a tradition peculiar to the Mathurā School. The author of the *Aśokāvadāna* probably goes no further than an adjustment of his ends by showing the great ruler as guided by Upagupta, and also possibly by assigning to Ānanda a part of the enormous offerings.

Of the six principal episodes which constitute the Aśoka-Story in the *Aśokāvadāna* five make almost no reference to the land of Mathurā or to the patriarch Upagupta[6]. The latter

appears only in the story of the pilgrimage and in the preceding scene, the obvious purpose of the author being to place him in the premier rank by the side of Chakravartin Aśoka. From this I conclude that this episode alone has been recast by the author of the *Aśokāvadāna*. It has again been done discreetly, for among the restored parts, one can find traces of the ancient story. There existed therefore a redaction of the Deeds of Aśoka, previous to the *Aśokāvadāna*, which had reached Mathurā and had been utilised by a writer of that region. It seems further that the author, not content with having made the work of a predecessor his own, had not even deemed it necessary to change the title. But the last point needs to be stated more precisely.

One of the recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* is entitled in Chinese, *A-yu-wang-king* which corresponds to the Sanskrit *Aśokarājasūtra*. Besides the name of the translated Chinese text *A-yu-wang-chuan* presupposes a Sanskrit original, *Aśokarājāvadāna*. The traditional formula that inaugurates the sūtras viz. "Thus have I heard," "Once upon a time......", is absent in the A. W. K. and the A.W.Ch., but it is retained in the beginning of the recension inserted in the *Divyāvadāna*. It is probable that the first recension of the Deeds of Aśoka appeared in the form and with the title of a sūtra. It was the *Aśokarājasūtra* or in a simpler form, the *Aśokasūtra*. Amalgamated by a writer of Mathurā with an account of the First Council and a life of the Patriarchs, it gave its name to the entire collection as is also testified to by the *A-yu-wang-king* (= *Aśokarājasūtra*). We believe, later the work, enlarged by the addition of new chapters, ceased to be considered any longer a sūtra and became the *Aśokāvadāna* (i.e. *A-yu-wang-chuan* in Chinese). Be that as it may, in order to avoid any modification of the accepted terminology, we shall continue to employ the expression, *Aśokāvadāna* with the import that we have bestowed on it up till now, and we shall reserve the title *Aśokarājasūtra* (briefly,—*Aśokasūtra*) for denoting the redaction of the Deeds of Aśoka anterior to the *Aśokāvadāna*, in the state in which it existed before being incorporated into the latter.

At this point some new problems crop up. Where and when had the *Aśokasūtra* been composed? This twofold

question has a direct bearing on our enquiries. Had the date of the *Aśokasūtra* been known it would allow us to determine with much precision the exact time of the composition of the *Aśokāvadāna*. Besides it is worth while to know in which locality the legend of Aśoka had been elaborated and by what route it had reached Mathurā. These diverse points could only be clarified by a more penetrating analysis of the Deeds of Aśoka.

NOTES

1. The first three sub titles of this column are absent in the text. We have restored them following the other recensions

2. All the page-references are to the edition of the *Divyāvadāna* by E.B. Cowell and R.A. Neil (Cambridge University Press, 1886)—*Translator.*

3. Strictly speaking this is not exact if the actual texts of the recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* are considered. Each of the episodes of Vitāśoka and Kuṇāla concludes with a fragment that narrates the acts of these personages during their previous births. These 'stories of the past' are put in the mouth of Upagupta who begins all on a sudden to speak to the Bhikshus, without his presence being explained and without it being known to anybody where and in what circumstances the conversation had taken place. If those words of Upagupta are struck off, any unbiased reader would not be able himself to guess them. The not very subtle manner in which the patriarch has been introduced on these two occasions and the insignificant role he has been made to play, make one think that the two 'stories of the past' are subsequent interpolations in the text of the *Aśokāvadāna*.[6] It seems that from a certain epoch the writers had felt the necessity of explaining the good or bad destiny of their heores always by the theory of *Karma*. Thus in the oldest redactions of the *Parinirvāṇasūtras* the episode of Subhadra, the last disciple of the Buddha was not followed by any 'story of the past'. It is at a sufficiently late date and in a few texts only that the episode has been recast on the model of the Jātakas.

4. Cf. *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha J. A.* 1918 II p. 455.

5. See in the *Parinirvāṇasūtras* the Buddha's prediction regarding Pāṭaliputra : *Mahāparinibbānasutta* C. I. § 28 ; *Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins* Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo XVII, 2, p. 73a.

6. Cf. Note 3 above.

CHAPTER V

THE SCHOOL OF KAUŚĀMBĪ AND THE LEGEND OF PIṆḌOLA

According to the V. M. S. the monks summoned to the Council of Vaiśālī were the residents of seven principal localities viz. the cities of Saṃkāśya, Pāṭaliputra, Śrughna, Mahiṣmatī (?) and Sahajāti as well as two villages of the Vṛiji country named 'Peaceful-journey' and Vāsavagrāma. This list is a document of the highest importance ; it specifies the places where the great monasteries stood at the time of its composition. It is instructive to compare these with the toponyms mentioned in the *Chullavagga* (XII. 1). The names of some cities are common to both the narratives, such as Vesāli, Saṃkassa and Sahajāti. Vāsavagrāma is omitted in the Pāli text, but one finds the proof of its existence in the very name of the bhikkhu Vāsavagāmika. Most of the places cited in the narrative of the Sthaviras are absent in that of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins e. g. Soreyya, Kaṇṇakujja, Udumbara, Aggalapura, Kosambī, Ahogaṅga, Patheyya and Avanti.

The localities enumerated in the V. M. S. reveal not a very extended perimeter whereas the geographical horizon of the *Chullavagga* (XII. 1), is much larger. Above all, two facts merit attention : Pāṭaliputra, the capital of the Mauryas is not mentioned much in the latter text. As a contrast, Kauśāmbī, which is not alluded to in the V. M. S., appears in the *Chullavagga* (XII. 1.) very prominently. It is to this city that Yaśas goes from the very first for recruiting his partisans and he goes there by the air-route. It all happens as if the account of the V. M. S. had been composed during a period when Buddhism was still confined to a narrow domain and when Pāṭaliputra was the seat of a flourishing community. On the contrary *Chullavagga* XII ought to be referring to an epoch when the orbit of the Church was much larger ; the influence of the communities of the west began to prevail from that

time ; Pāṭaliputra had lost its religious importance and Kauśāmbī had attained the premier rank. It follows from this that *Chullavagga* XII represents, in comparison to the parallel account of the V. M. S., a relatively late redaction and also that the city of Kauśāmbī must have been one of the centres where the Sthavira sect was the most in favour.

Other facts bring to light the role of the monks of Vatsa in the formation of the Pāli Canon. In the V. M. S. the account of the First Council concludes after the eulogy of the Law made by Mahākāśyapa. In *Chullavagga* XI the closure of the assembly is followed by two episodes : the one very short, narrates the arrival of Pūrāṇa and his disciples ; the other which is much longer brings into the scene the bhikshu Channa. Entrusted with the task of notifying to this disciple the punishment which the Buddha had inflicted on him, Ānanda goes to the Ghoshitārāma Monastery of Kauśāmbī where the culprit was staying, and announces to him that he had been banished from the Saṃgha. Seized with remorse Channa enters into meditation and acquires the qualifications of an Arhat so that the interdict is at once raised. This story is evidently analogous to the account of the Trial of Ānanda as reported in many of the narratives of the First Council. According to a sufficiently wide-spread tradition, Ānanda convicted of infamy, had been expelled from the assembly of the five hundred, and provoked by this humiliation, he raised himself very soon to the rank of an Arhat. In modelling the episode of Channa on that of the Trial of Ānanda, the author of *Chullavagga* XI intended undoubtedly to rehabilitate the monk of Kauśāmbī who had been condemned for a grave offence. Not being able to deny the guilt of his confrère who had attained public notoriety, the writer undertook to misrepresent the tradition for the highest glory of Kauśāmbī as well as for the edification of all. He spoke of the offence in veiled terms and showed that the chastisement was after all only a means of sanctification : as soon as he is humiliated, Channa raises himself to the rank of an Arhat so that the steps taken against him become inoperative. In the Pāli text the story follows closely the public confession of Ānanda. After the numerous offences avowed by the latter, that of Channa, which again is

not specified, does not make any impression and appears excusable[1].

Besides, the procedure followed for imposing the ban on the monk of Kauśāmbī is likely to throw into relief the importance of the monastery of Ghositārāma. Ānanda goes there solemnly accompanied by five hundred bhikshus. Then the foremost concern of the members of the Council, after the closure of the assembly, is to despatch to that monastery a delegation equally numerous. The credulous reader is led to infer from this that since the time of the Buddha Kauśāmbi had been the seat of a very powerful community. Yet, the institution of monasteries was unknown to primitive Buddhism: the lists of the *dhūtāṅgas* and the earliest texts of the *Suttanipāta* leave us in no doubt in this respect[2]. To pretend that the Ghositārāma was contemporary of Śākyamuni was to commit an anachronism the reasons for which can be easily guessed : admitted late into the society of the faithful, the monks of Kauśāmbī like those of all the communities of the west, were on the look out for arguments in favour of the antiquity of their monastery. The episode of Channa as they conceived it and associated it with the account of the First Council, enabled them to attain a two-fold result : they rehabilitated Channa who down to that time had lowered them in public eye ; at the same time they let it be understood that the Ghositārāma was one of the earliest and most venerable monasteries of the Church.

In the *Parinirvāṇasūtra* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins Ānanda is found to entreat the Buddha not to pass into Nirvāṇa in a miserable market-town, but rather to end his life in one of the six great cities : Śrāvastī, Sāketa, Champā, Vārāṇasī, Vaiśālī and Rājagṛiha (Tripiṭaka, Tokyo Ed. XVII, 2. p. 79b, Col. 19). In another *Nirvāṇasūtra*, the *Fo-pan-ni-yuan-king*, Ānanda enumerates the same cities in a slightly different order : Śrāvastī, Sāketa, Champā, Rājagṛiha, Vārāṇasī and Vaiśālī (Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo, p. 17a, Col. 14). The exhortation of Ānanda is reproduced in the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna* and the *Mahāsudassana suttas* ; but the list of the cities has been modified there : "Sire," says Ānanda, "there are other great cities : Champā, Rājagaha, Sāvatthī, Sāketa, Kosambī and Varanasi" (Rhys. Davids, *Sacred*

Books of the Buddhists II pp. 161, 199). The city of the Vatsa country (Kauśāmbī) has been substituted for Vaiśālī. On this occasion too, the Pāli text deviates from the traditional version in order to extol Kauśāmbī.

The accounts of the death of the Master and of the first two Councils are among the most important sections of the Dharma and the Vinaya Piṭakas. Of the three fragments we have studied, the redaction of the Sthaviras presents the same deviation in comparison to that of the Sarvāstivādins : above all an eagerness to exalt Kauśāmbī and its monasteries, manifests itself in it. Since this rank prejudice is revealed in the basic and extremely divergent texts, it is probable that the whole of the canonical writings constituting the heritage of the Sthaviras had been refounded, classified and remodelled in the monasteries of the Vatsa country. In other words, the monks of Kauśāmbī appear to have elaborated the first rough draft of the Pāli Canon.

This inference is by no means in disagreement with what we know of the distribution of the middle Indian dialects. Although the origin of Pāli is a controversial question, it may be affirmed that this religious language had been born neither in the domain of the Māgadhi nor in the country of the North-West. To be more precise, it appears that one must look for its cradle within a perimeter limited in the north by the frontier of the Śūrasenas, in the east by a line passing somewhere beyond Sāñchī and Barhut, in the south by the Vindhya mountains and in the west by the meridian of Nāsik, that is to say, within a region, the two poles of which are Kauśāmbi in the north-east and Ujjayinī in the south-west. Of these two cities, the second is particularly known as a centre of civilisation[8] so that some scholars have attempted to describe it as a linguistic capital. Without disputing that the School of Ujjayinī had exercised an influence on the development of the Pāli Canon and the diffusion of the Sthavira sect, we think that originally this sect had its positive links with the country of Vatsa. At any rate this is what emerges from the comparison which we have proceeded to institute between the parallel fragments of the Dharma and the Vinaya Piṭakas.

This leads us to specify the general notions laid down at

the commencement of the Introduction. We have indicated three principal steps in the route of Buddhism towards the north-west, viz. Magadha, Mathurā and Kashmir ; and we have observed that the doctrine was at the same time propagated all along the other commercial routes, specially towards the south-west following the Kauśāmbī-Sāñchī-Ujjayinī-Barygaza axis. Distinctive tendencies characterised the development of the faith in each of these directions. Drawn along towards these far away regions the doctrine began to change little by little. The Sarvāstivādin sect appears to have been born at Mathurā with a Canon written in Sanskrit. Besides some basic texts of the Pāli Canon bear the stamp of the School of Kauśāmbī. The Sarvāstivādin and the Sthavira sects had therefore from the beginning distinct orientations : the former turned rather towards Kashmir and Gandhāra and the latter towards Ujjayinī and Barygaza.

It remains to mention a synchronism between the phases and their development. Were the Sthaviras in advance of their rivals ? Did these groups react on each other, or else did they pursue their particular destinies independently ? The analysis of the Deeds of Aśoka and the investigation into the circumstances in which this theme had evolved, enable us to point out in a precise manner the reciprocal relations and influences of the Schools of Kauśāmbī and Mathurā.

Since the day when Kauśāmbī became the seat of an important Buddhist community the writers of the locality had sought to give it its patent of "holy land". They pretended that the Buddha had journeyed there. The legend of Udena (Udayana), King of Vatsa, the same as has been recounted in the Aṭṭhakathā of the *Dhammapada*, certainly belonged to the ancient folk-lore of this region. It informs us that during the life-time of Śākyamuni three merchants named Ghosita, Kukkuṭa and Pāvāriya lived in Kauśāmbī. They erected three large vihāras, the Ghositārāma, the Kukkuṭārāma and the Pāvāriyakārāma ; and the Master, invited by them, consented to visit each of these monasteries (*Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* I p. 208). This part of the story had for its object to prove that the great convents of Kauśāmbī belonged to the time of the Buddha and had been sanctified by his presence. The text is

besides, instructive as it goes to confirm our views on the part played by the śreṣṭhins in the diffusion of Buddhism. We may compare the gift of Jetavana by Anāthapiṇḍika and many similar instances with it. It appears that in many cases the new religion owed its earliest establishments to persons enriched by trade.

Later the chroniclers set themselves to exalt these humble beginnings by extolling the condition of the donnors. They sought besides, noble patrons for the Church fiom among kings and ministers. In the *Divyāvadāna* Ghoshila is one of the three ministers of the king of Kauśāmbī (*Divyāvadāna* XXXVI p. 529). According to the Tibetans, drawing undoubtedly from an Indian source, four kings were born contemporaneously with the Buddha and had been in communication with him viz. at Śrāvastī Prasenajit, at Rājagṛiha Bimbisāra, at Ujjayinī Pradyota and at Kauśāmbī Udayana (Schiefner *Tibetische Lebensbeschreibung* p. 235). The sacred writers have grouped these personages around the Buddha in order to provide the latter with a retinue composed of the greatest heroes of legend. No evidence of historical nature however guarantees that all of them had lived in the same time, or particularly, that all these kings had known the Master personally[8]. In the Aṭṭhakathā of the *Dhammapada* Udena (= Udayana) is made ultimately to listen to the prediction of Śākyamuni. Likewise in the *Mākandikāvadāna* which is the 36th narrative of the *Divyāvadāna* the Buddha is found to have the king of Kauśāmbī as a member of his audience. In other works, such as the Chinese translation of the *Dharmapada* and the *Udayana-Vatasarājaparipṛichchhā*, this prince is described as possessing characteristics of a fervent disciple of the Buddha (Lacote *Essai sur Guṇāḍhya et la Bṛhatkathā* pp. 264-65). One notices once more in all these accounts the influence of the Buddhists of Kauśāmbī desirous of proving the antiquity of their brotherhood and of assigning to it, since its inception, an illustrious protector.

Making the Buddha a host of the Ghoshitārāma monastery and representing the local hero Udayana as a Buddhist zealot, were certainly ingenius artifices but these could not lead very far. The life of Udayana, such as it had been rooted in

popular memory, was anything but edifying. It was impossible to transform profoundly the legend of a monarch, cruel and notorious for his crimes. For projecting on the origins of the Church of Kauśāmbī the radiance of a reputation less profane and more sacred, what was required was a patron-saint who would be for that community what Upagupta was for the brotherhood of Mathurā. Such a personage was Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja.

According to the commentary of the Pāli *Theragāthās*, 'Piṇḍola was born in the time of the Buddha as the son of the chaplain of King Udena (Udayana) of Kosāmbi...........' (cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 110). The tradition that links up Piṇḍola with the country of Kauśāmbī and associates him with Udayana, king of Vatsa, is constant. According to a sutta of the *Saṃyukta-Nikāya*, which has its equivalent in the *Saṃyuktāgama* Udayana comes to discover Piṇḍola at Ghoshitārāma and wants to know from him how the youngest ones among the bhikshus had been able to attain so dignified an attitude. In the *Pin-t'eou-lu-t'u-lo-cho wei yeou-t'o-yen wang chuo fa yuan king* (Nanijo 1347) Piṇḍola replying to a question of Udayana demonstrates the vanity of royal grandeurs by a long series of comparisons. The prose commentary on the Pāli *Jātaka* also refers to a legend which brings face to face Piṇḍola and the king of Vatsa. All these texts have been analysed in a very important memoir entitled *Les Seize Arhat protecteurs de la Loi* (pp. 85-88) by Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes.

If Piṇḍola was one of the premier monks belonging to Kauśāmbī, one can understand the faithful of that region choosing him as patorn and endeavouring to raise him to the rank of the great saints. He could not be made to play an important role in the service of the Buddha ; that place had been taken by eminent personages for a longer time past. During the epoch when Kauśāmbī became the seat of a flourishing community, the legend of Sākyamuni had pretty nearly attained a fixed shape ; the new saint could appear in it only at a later level as a supernumerary. There did not remain any other way than to introduce him in a more recent cycle of stories the subject-matter of which being very loose could yet

receive new impressions. It may be seen that the process of elaboration of the Aśoka-legend came to be consummated precisely in the same region of Kauśāmbī and during the same epoch when Piṇḍola had become celebrated. The fusion of these elements was almost inevitable. It is in the cycle of legends associated with the great Chakravartin that Piṇḍola was to occupy the eminent place which the pride of his compatriots had assigned to him.

The interview between Piṇḍola and Aśoka is narrated in four recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna*. These parallel texts have been studied in detail by Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes. I reproduce here the beginning of the story from the *Divyāvadāna*, after its translation as made by them.

Divyāvadāna XXVII p. 399 : (King Aśoka addresses an invitation to the Buddhist clergy ; three hundred thousand bhikshus respond to the appeal)............"but no body occupied the seat of the ancient one (*vṛiddhāsana*). The king asked : 'Why is that seat of the ancient one not occupied ? Yonder, there is an elder named Yaśas who possesses the six super-knowledges'. He (Yaśas) said : 'Great king, that is the seat of the ancient one !' The king said : 'Oh Sthavira, is there any one older than thou ?' The Sthavira said : 'Yes, great king, there is one of us whom the best of the speaking beings, the sovereign master, has declared to be the foremost among the roaring ones. It is to Piṇḍola Bharadvaja, the foremost one, sire, that the seat belongs !' Then the king with all his pores shivering like a kadamba flower, said : 'Is there any monk, who has seen the Buddha and is still alive ?' The Sthavira replied : 'Yes great king, Piṇḍola Bhāradvaja (that is his name) has seen the Buddha and he is still alive'. The king said : 'Sthavira, is it possible for me to see him ?' The Sthavira said : 'Great king, thou shalt see him presently. This is the time of his arrival' ......" (*Les Seize Arhat protecteurs de la Loi* p. 120).

It is quite clear that the writers of Kauśāmbī have made use of Piṇḍola in the same manner in which those of Mathurā have utilised Upagupta. In each of the two cities attempts were made to honour a local saint by showing that he had received the homage of the Chakravartin Aśoka. But while

there was no difficulty in holding up Aśoka and Upagupta as contemporaries, the bringing together of Piṇḍola and the great monarch constituted a blatant anachronism. Piṇḍola was known as a disciple of the Buddha How could he again be associated with the Maurya Court ? The difficulty could be avoided only by affirming that the monk did not die but continued to act as guardian to the Law through the centuries, without attaining Nirvāṇa.

This solution had not been adopted without reason. It was suggested to the redactor of the *Aśokasūtra* by those versions which came to be grouped round the name of Piṇḍola at an early date. In case one admits that the latter is the only one from among the disciples of the Buddha to be found foregoing access to Nirvāṇa, he must also be supposed to have been guilty (of some offence) and liable to punishment. It would be proper therefore to examine the antecedents of Piṇḍola before analysing the rest of the story.

Probably from very early times he had gained notoriety for intemperance. A narrative of the V. M. S. in the Section of the Remedies (*Bheṣajyavastu*) illustrates this shortcoming and explains its origin. Requested to describe his previous birth Piṇḍola replied through the following verse[6] : "Formerly I was born in a noble family. Next to my parents, I was independent in the house. My father had ordered me to manage his shops and to look after the members of the family. My heart was always avaricious ; I gave neither clothes nor food to my brothers, sisters, and the servants. Also, when my mother demanded food from me, I did not give it to her. Further my lips uttered these foul words, 'You may eat tiles and stones'. As a result of this evil action I fell into the great hells,—the great burning hell (*Pratapana*) and that of the Black Cord (*Kālasūtra*). In those places I endured all sorts of sufferings. After having gone through these sufferings in the different hells, I was born among men ; but as a result of that evil action I continued to devour tiles and stones ; when the hour of repast came, I had never enough to eat ; hunger and thirst tortured me ; and in this way I constantly endured torments. I am at present passing through my last birth ; born among human beings, I have

renounced worldly life, and I am serving in person the great master who has the Perfect Illumination and who is without any superior. Just because I have been able to come out of worldly life, entering the religion of the lion of the Śākyas, I have been able to secure the road to Arhatship ; I have ceased to burn and I enjoy coolness. The Blessed One (the Buddha) has made the following prediction about me : 'When you shall have dispelled the passions, by virtue of the lion's roar you shall have the premier rank'. Now, although I have obtained supernatural insight, I continue to eat tiles and stones. Even if I have to pass through hundred *kalpas*, the acts which I have committed would not cease to be in my way. Oh elders, be aware of this now : I recall the evil deed of my past life ; I have already undergone all kinds of sufferings : What remains of my previous actions must now exhaust itself. My name is Piṇḍola. Now before this great assembly I narrate the acts of my past life in the middle of the great lake that is never heated (*Anavatapta*)".

Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes have shown that the very name Piṇḍola "agrees well with the idea of a gluttonous monk, evidently because of its kinship with the word *Piṇḍa* which literally means a 'small ball', particularly a 'ball of cooked rice', but which by a normal process of development, has come to aquire the meaning of 'food' in general, and in a more restricted sense 'the food-stuff given as alms to a monk". (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 91).

Piṇḍola therefore, as his name indicates, had from the beginning the evil reputation of being a gluttonous monk. This trivial fact could not fail to give offence to the devotees, particularly to those of Kauśāmbī. So we come across some writers belonging precisely to the Sthavira sect, who made an effort to mellow down the tradition.

According to the Pāli *Theragāthā*-commentary already cited, one day Piṇḍola received a visit from one of his old friends who was an avaricious Brāhmaṇa The Thera persuaded him to make an offering which he undertook to make over to the Community. But because the Brāhmaṇa believed that the Thera was greedy and looked for his own personal advantage, Piṇḍola set about to instruct him on the advantages accru-

ing from gifts made to the community of monks, in these words :

"I do not live in misconduct ; food never engrosses my heart. The machine is kept fit by nourishment, ; that is why I go on begging."

The *Milindapañho* cites two other verses not less edifying, which it attributes to Piṇḍola in the same manner :

"The sage who has realised the true nature of the body and has a good insight into it, remains absolutely unattached amidst objects of senses" (*Milinda*, p. 398)[7]

"In hell (there are) terrible perils ; in *nirvāṇa* immense happiness ; these are the two objects which the yogin must consider". (*Ibid*, p. 404).

According to the Pāli *Udāna* IV. 6. it is with regard to Piṇḍola that the Buddha pronounced one of the most celebrated stanzas collected in the *Dhammapada* (verse 185) : "......The Blessed One (Buddha) looked at the venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja who was seated not far from him, squatting with his head and shoulders erect, as a monk of the forests, as a monk living on alms, etc.......And when he had seen him, he at once uttered the following formula : "Do not speak evil ; do not do evil ; abide by the prohibitions ; observe well moderation with regard to food ; have your bed and your seat in a lonely place ; apply yourself to the domain of the spirit ; such is the teaching of the Buddhas".[8]

Finally, the prose-text that accompanies the verses in the Pāli *Jātakas* shows Piṇḍola as teaching the Law to the wives of King Udena (Udayana) (*Mātaṅga-Jātaka* IV. 375). That prince "in a fit of rage emptied a basket full of red ants on the body of the Thera. The Thera from a height in space addressed a lesson to the King ; afterwards he descended at Jetavana before the hall of the Buddha......"

In the anecdote of the *Bheṣajyavastu* of the V. M. S. Piṇḍola presents himself as a gluttonous monk. In the collection of the Pāli *Theragathās*, on the contrary, he preaches temperance and moderation. The former text certainly reflects more archaic conceptions. It is by no means an accident that all the Pāli texts cited earlier, unanimously represent Piṇḍola in an edifying and respectable attitude.[9] On this

occasion too the Sthaviras have set themselves against the Sarvāstivādins in so far as they have modified the ancient traditions in order to favour Kauśāmbī and its saints.

Gluttony among the clergy has always excited popular imagination. The gluttony of Piṇḍola was the subject of many stories that have been preserved for us. One of these which we have just reproduced, is found in the V. M. S. in the Section of the Remedies. The different Vinayas include at least two other versions of it.

Mahīśāsaka Vinaya Chap. 26. (Tok. XVI, 2, 51a ; *Les Seize Arhat...* pp. 99-103).

The first scene takes place at Vaiśālī. The Lichchhavis had found a bowl shaped like an ox-head and made of sandalwood. "They placed it on the top of a lofty tree and made the following proclamation : 'If someone endowed with supernatural power can take it (by means of that power), we shall give it to him.' Then Piṇḍola said to Maudgalyāyana, 'The Buddha has said that you are the greatest through your supernatural faculties. Why do you not take it ?' Maudgalyāyana replied, 'You too, possess supernatural faculties. Therefore, go, and take it'. Then Piṇḍola took it for giving it to the monks ....."

The following episode takes place at Rājagṛiha Piṇḍola was engaged in converting the sister of the head of a household (*gṛihapati*) named Pa-t'i. He approached her at the moment when she was making a cake with her own hand. She refused to give him to eat The monk displayed his supernatural powers in various ways ; but the woman continued to tell him unceasingly : 'I would not give you anything'. Now, not far from Rājagṛiha there was a huge piece of stone. 'Piṇḍola seated himself upon it and along with the stone he entered flying into Rājagṛiha. At the sight of that phenomenon the people of the town were seized with great panic. They feared that the stone might fall on the ground ; there was none among them who did not run away. Then the stone arrived just over the residence of the elder sister of the *gṛihapati* ; and afterwards it stopped there and moved no further. The woman saw it and was very much afraid ; her heart was seized with fear ; her hair stood erect and she said to Piṇḍola with folded palms : 'I beg of you to grant me the safety of my life. Put the stone in its original

place and I shall give you food.' Piṇdola came back from the the spot carrying the stone which he placed in its original site". Finally the sister of the *gṛihapati* was converted and she received the five prohibitions (*śīlas*). As regards Piṇḍola, he was blamed by the Buddha, who said to the bhikshus : 'Henceforth he is no longer permitted to manifest his supernatural faculties'.

Here, we have two distinct accounts. The first, regarding a sandalwood bowl, is found in a more elaborate form in the other Vinayas. The second is based on an ancient nucleus, very little edifying in itself, enveloped in a moralising story viz. that of the conversion of the elder sister of Pa-t'i. The old element of the story may be summarised thus : Desirous of procuring for himself a cake that a woman had refused to give him, Piṇḍola raised himself in the air with a huge stone ; and the woman afraid of being crushed, eagerly came forward to offer him what he had wanted. In its original form this story illustrates the impudence of the monk who does not shrink from anything mean in order to satisfy his greedy appetite.

The *Vinaya* of the Sarvāstivādins, Chap. 37 (*Che song liu* Tokyo XVI, 5, p. 40a *Les Seize Ahat* pp. 103-07).

A householder of Rājagṛiha made a bowl of sandalwood. He suspended it on a high post and uttered these words : 'If any Śramaṇa or Brāhmaṇa can take it without the help of a ladder or a pole, let him carry it away !' Piṇḍola coming to know of it approached the householder and sat down near him. "Immediately he entered into the contemplation of the corresponding *dhyāna* ; then from his seat, he stretched his hand, took the bowl and showed it to the *gṛihapati*. The latter told him : 'According to what I have told you previously, this object belongs to you'. The householder further said, 'Give it to me for a moment'. Then he took the bowl, returned home, filled it with pulp of rice and gave it to Piṇḍola. After he had eaten, Piṇḍola took the bowl and showed it to the bhikshus, saying, 'You people, look at the bowl ; its perfume is exquisite.' The Buddha having been informed of the episode, took Piṇḍola to task and told him : 'I banish you till the end of this bodily existence. You must not remain any longer in this land of Jambudvīpa'. Then Piṇḍola entered into the

proper *samādhi*, disappeared from Jambudvīpa and appeared in Godanī.

This story is closely linked with the first narrative of the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas and differs considerably from the second episode reported in the same text. In one case Piṇḍola miraculously extends his arm to unhook a bowl of sandal-wood ; in the other he raises himself in the air with a big stone in order to frighten a woman. Nevertheless, the two themes have this in common that both are miracles performed by a monk to satisfy his covetousness. Whenever the redactors of the Vinayas wished to comment on the rule that prohibited the display of supernatural faculties before the multitude, they remembered the case of Piṇḍola. The author of the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins recalled the anecdote of the sandal-wood bowl. The author of the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas developed the theme of the air-borne stone and mentioned the episode of the sandal-wood bowl only as passing recollection of an event. In all these cases the stories are found to deviate from their original purpose. These did no longer serve to illustrate the gluttony of Piṇḍola, but were meant to prove that it was not proper to mainfest supernatural powers before the masses.

The *Vinaya* of the Sthaviras, *Chulla Vagga* V. 8 (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 94).

An important person of Rājagṛiha suspended on top of a pole, a bowl carved out of a bloc of sandal-wood and said, "If there is a Śramaṇa or a Brāhmaṇa that be an Arhat and that has supernatural powers, let him take the wooden bowl ; I give it to him.' Up to this point the story is nearly identical with that of the Sarvāstivādins ; but later on the writer seems to have remembered the miracle of the air-borne stone. Piṇḍola here does not unhook the bowl by stretching his arm. He raises himself in space, seizes the bowl and goes round Rājagṛiha three times consecutively before a wondering crowd.

Dharmagupta Vinaya, Chapter 51 (*Sseu fen liu* Tokyo XV, 6, p. 34a *Les Seize Arhat* pp. 96-98).

A *gṛihapati* of Rājagṛiha carved a bowl out of a large piece of sandal-wood and suspended it on top of a big pole. He made the following proclamation : 'If there is in this city a Śramaṇa or a Brāhmaṇa who is an Arhat and who is endowed

with supernatural power, he should be able to carry away this bowl'. Up to this point the theme of the sandal-wood bowl has been exactly reproduced ; but later on the episode of the stone reappears. At that time Piṇḍola and Mahāmaudgalyāyana were seated on a huge stone. The latter said to the former : 'You are an Arhat ; you can take the bowl'. Then Piṇḍola having listened to the words of Maudgalyāyana, made his body leap into the air along with the stone. He went seven times round the city of Rājagṛiha. All the people of the locality began to run from one direction to another, crying out in fear that the stone was going to fall. Piṇḍola took the bowl and handed it over to the *gṛihapati* who filled it with excellent etables.

Already in the Pāli Vinaya it was visible that the theme of 'the sandal-wood bowl' had been contaminated by that of the 'the air-borne boulder'. In the Vinaya of the Dharmaguptas the mingling of the two accounts is still more perceptible.

When we have distinguished the different narratives that recount the faults of Piṇḍola, it becomes possible for us to put our finger on the one among them from which the author of the *Aśokasūtra* has evidently borrowed. Here is the version of the *Divyāvadāna* :

"The King said : 'Elder, where hast thou seen the Buddha and how ?' The elder (Piṇḍola) said : 'When .. ... etc. (the miracle of Śrāvastī and the miracle of Saṃkāśya). And also when on the invitation of Sumāgadhā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍada, he went to Puṇḍravardhana by magical means accompanied by five hundred Arhats. Then, myself, by magical means I bounded towards the sky, seizing a mountain-boulder and went to Puṇḍravardhana ; and for that reason the Bhagavat hurled the following injunction on me : 'Thou shalt not have Parinirvāṇa as long as the Law does not disappear'. "

The *A-yu-wang-king* and the *Tsa-a-han-king* reproduce sufficiently faithfully the above passage of the *Divyāvadāna*. The *A-yu-wang-chuan* refers to the episode in the following terms : "When Su-mo-kia-ti invited the Buddha to the city of* 'Full-Opulence' (*Pūrṇavardhana*) five hundred Arhats arrived at the city of 'Full-Opulence' each manifesting his supernatural transformations. As for me, I transformed myself magically into a being seated inside a cave of jewels in a moun-

tain of jewels and went to the city of "Full-Opulence".' Here, there is no longer any question of any punishment inflicted on Piṇḍola by the Buddha (*Les Seize Arhat* pp. 122-23).

The author of the *Aśokasūtra* has reproduced the theme of the "air-borne boulder"; but he has modified the circumstances of the story. It is no longer at Rājagṛiha; it is when going with the Master to the city of Puṇḍravardhana that Piṇḍola manifests his supernatural power. It is easy to explain the change, if one would admit that the episode of the *Aśokasūtra* had been written at Kauśāmbī by the compatriots of Piṇḍola who were inclined to excuse him When the Buddha went to Puṇḍravardhana, he went there by the air-route as also did the five hundred Arhats who accompained him. Piṇḍola was going to imitate them. His raising himself into the air through magical power like them, cannot be held up as a grievance against him. In this instance therefore, our Arhat has been pretty nearly exonerated. But overmuch mitigation of his fault would render any form of punishment impossible. In the *A-yu-wang-chuan* Piṇḍola follows the Arhats who "mainfest supernatural transformations". He himself, changes his traditional boulder into a cave of jewels in order not to look less powerful. In these circumstances he was safe from all reproach and that is why the compiler of the A. W. Ch. has logically abstained from representing him as being denounced by the Buddha.

It will be seen how much the theme of the 'aerial stone' has deviated from the ancient tales which we know merely in slender redactions, down to the latest recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna.* Originally Piṇḍola raises a block of stone in order to wrest a cake from a woman. Ere long this notion begins to appear scandalous. In the Vinaya of the Dharamaguptas the theme of the stone is an accessory element of the story: the monk is no longer reproached on the ground of having procured a sandal-wood bowl by supernatural means. In the earliest recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* also the fault is mitigated: it is for accompanying the Buddha that Piṇḍola flies with his boulder. Finally, in the A. W. Ch. he is not more guilty than his five hundred companions; and the stone which originally he had put into very evil use, becomes the wonderful niche where a saint takes shelter.

The attitude of the early story-tellers is opposed to that of the more recent writers. The previous ones had composed a satire on a gluttonous monk. The others, particularly the author of the *Aśokasūtra*, could not refrain from showing their sympathy to Piṇḍola. This does not make prominent the offence alone, but the account of the punishment as well. In the anecdote from the *Bheṣajyvavaṣtu* of the V.M.S. Piṇḍola after a stay in hell, was once again condemned to eat stones and bricks. In the Vinaya of the Sarvāstivādins he was simply banished from Jambudvīpa. In the *Divyāvadāna*, the Buddha says to Piṇḍola ; "Thou shalt not enter into Nirvāṇa so that this Law shall not disappear". The *Tsa-a-han-king* is more explicit. The sentence uttered by the Buddha is reported there thus : 'You shall remain on earth without attaining Nirvāṇa : you shall protect and maintain my true Law and you shall prevent my Law from being destroyed.' At this stage the punishment is no longer a cause of disgrace but of glory to the culprit. Out of the gluttonous monk who was, during the early centuries, an object of raillery, his compatriots have made a saint who is found to take upon himself the glorious task of watching the destiny of the Law.

After all, the legend of Channa and that of Piṇḍola, have evolved in the same way. These two monks lived in Kauśāmbī and the earliest traditions represented them as persons hardly recommendable. Is it not the indication of an unfavourable prejudice against that city ? Before it had become the seat of a flourishing community, the country of Vatsa was possibly viewed with contempt by the monks belonging to the eastern communities and it was accepted as true that the city of Kauśāmbī could have sprung into existence only among mean greedy and licentious people. Channa and Piṇḍola had thus stood in the eyes of the Magadhan people as two monks having very little zeal, belonging to an eccentric province where the Law had not yet prospered. Later, the monks of Kauśāmbī had become numerous and influential and they endeavoured to struggle against this prejudice by rehabilitating their brethren. We have seen how they go to work with regard to everything concerning Channa. The defence of Piṇḍola had been presented in a manner which is not less ingenius.

On the whole we can enumerate three component parts of the *Aśokasūtra* in each of which Piṇḍola is brought into the picture : (a) the arrival of the old saint who comes to preside over the assembly of all the Arhats ; (b) the account of his past offences ; (c) the description of his punishment. It would perhaps be realised now how these elements came to be incorporated into the general body of the text. Desirous of elevating their compatriot to the rank of a great saint the writers of Kauśāmbī had thought of assigning to him an eminent place in the Aśoka-Saga Piṇḍola for example. presents himself on the occasion when the king sends an invitation to the Arhats of the whole world. Being the oldest man in the assembly he occupies the seat preserved for the ancient one (*Vṛiddhāsana*). He appears thus superior to Yaśas himself and in this manner the brother-hood of Kauśāmbī is glorified in the person of its parton. But in order to make it appear probable, it was necessary to explain the survival of Piṇḍola (down to the time of Aśoka). An old story furnished the means of it. From the narratives that represent the monk as guilty of gluttony, only the memory of a very trivial offence is retained following which Piṇḍola had been condemned to stay on in the world for acting as the custodian of the Law. This concession made to ancient ideas is an extremely clever one. The fastening of a recent fiction to the basic secular traditions gave the former an appearance of truth ; the survival of the old saint was explained in a satisfactory manner ; at the same time the foundation of his cult was laid by making him the Protector of the Universal Church.

It becomes clear from the preceding account that the episode of the reception of Piṇḍola as it is narrated in the *Aśokasūtra*, has been imagined by the compatriots of the saint in order to glorify him as well as to confer on him the dignity of the Protector of the Law. This conclusion has an important corrolary. If the *Aśokasūtra* comprises an episode composed at Kauśāmbī, the sūtra must be regarded as having necessarily been either written or remodelled in this city. It would be convenient to choose here between the two alternatives.

Before the arrival of Piṇḍola, Aśoka and Yaśas are found together in the story. Afterwards drops in the old saint who

occupies the seat preserved for the oldest sage and pushes Yaśas down to the second rank. It appears that here, as in the episode of Upagupta, we are entitled to distinguish two different strata of tradition, viz. an ancient framework characterised by the pre-eminence of Yaśas, and a more recent account in which Piṇḍola occupies the premier place. The dialogue between Yaśas and Aśoka would in that case have to be regarded as an essential link between the rest of the sutra and the scene of the reception of Piṇḍola. According to this hypothesis, the successive selection of monks in relation to the great king, had been determined by local considerations. The monks of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery situated in the capital city, had at first recounted that Yaśas, the president of the Second Council, had been at the same time abbot of their monastery and the spiritual director of Aśoka. Later, a writer of Kauśāmbī had inserted in the framework thus constituted, an episode tending to substitute Yaśas by Piṇḍola. Finally the *Aśokasūtra* had made its way to Mathurā and for analogous reasons the patriarch Upagupta was introduced into it. In case this analysis proves correct, it would be possible to distinguish three important phases in the evolution of the Aśoka-legend : (a) the Aśoka-Story is worked out originally in Magadha : (b) the *Aśokasūtra* is formed by the addition of a scene in which Piṇḍola makes his appearance ; (c) the *Aśokāvadāna* reproduces the *Aśokasūtra* to which a new episode is once more added. To each successive stage of the legend a different saint is found to be associated, Yaśas, Piṇḍola and Upagupta, each representing respectively a religious and intellectual centre viz. Pāṭaliputra, Kauśāmbī and Mathurā.

It appears that the cannonical texts on the one hand and the Aśoka-Saga on the other have been transmitted along entirely different lines. The *Aśokasūtra* contains an episode inspired by the parochialism of the clergy of Kauśāmbī. The work must therefore have reached Mathurā through the medium of the monks of Vatsa. On the contrary, the *Aśokāvadāna* in its chapter on the First Council, totally ignores the adventure of Channa that characterises the text of the Pāli *Chullavagga* XI. The story of the death of the Master and the account of the Second Council, inserted in the V. M. S., do not

present any of the features which appear to have been due to the initiative of the writers of Kauśāmbī in the corresponding texts of the Canon of the Sthaviras. Speaking generally it appears that the texts properly canonical in character, have passed without intervention from the Magadhan collection to the Sarvāstivadin Canon, whereas a legendary account like the Aśoka-Story reached Mathurā only after having received the stamp of the writers of Kauśāmbī.

What is the cause of this difference of treatment? The first set of canonical texts was written in the Magadhan dialect. When the Sthaviravādins and the Sarvāstivādins asserted themselves respectively in the regions of Kauśāmbī and Mathurā, each of them had drawn upon a literary language which was a source of prestige and an instrument of propaganda. Thus the Scriptures were eagerly translated into Sanskrit at Mathurā, and into Pāli at Kauśāmbī. These translations had been made (at both places apparently) from the original Magadhan dialect since the characteristic innovations of the Kauśāmbī School are absent in the Canon of the Sarvāstivādins.

In the case of a literary text it could all have happened in a different way. But the Magadhan dialect which was hardly adequate even for the task of redaction of the canonical texts, was decidedly unfit for the flowering of refined works in it. One can comprehend that numerous legends were formed among the communities of the East, but it is difficult to admit that these received any final shape there. The writers of Kauśāmbī must have borrowed from the narrators of Pāṭaliputra, the frame-work and the principal developments of the legend of Aśoka; but it concerned them to prepare out of these a properly literary work. Written in a harmonious, living, dramatic and substantial language, the *Aśokasūtra* proved very different from the dry and monotonous canonical sūtras in the Magadhan dialect. It made a great noise. It quickly became popular, at first in the monasteries where Pāli was the common language, and afterwards among the neighbouring communities. When the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* composed his work, he inserted the *Aśokasūtra* in it with some additions but without any substantial modification of a work which had become an object of everybody's admiration.

The above discussion happens to suppose that the legend of Aśoka, elaborated among the Magadhan confraternity, was crystallised into almost a definitive shape at Kauśāmbī. When we have thus determined the probable origin of the *Aśokasūtra*, it remains to fix the extreme dates between which it could have been written.

The last kings of Magadha mentioned in the *Aśokasūtra*, are Pushyavarman and Pushyamitra. The author attaches both of them to the Maurya family but it seems to be well established that Pushyamitra dethroned the last Maurya ruler and founded a new dynasty viz. that of the Śuṅgas. The *Aśokasūtra* in which the usurper is named, could have been written only after his accession. The *coup d'etat* must be referred to the early decades of the 2nd century B. C. Five of the Purāṇas agree in stating that the Mauryas reigned for 137 years. This would make the dynasty last down to about 184 B. C.. Further according to the Purāṇas Pushyamitra had reigned for 36 years, that is to say, from 184 to about 148 B. C.

The *Aśokasūtra* tells us that under this prince the Buddhists were cruelly persecuted; stūpas and monasteries were destroyed; a price was set upon the heads of (Buddhist) monks. After having sustained a defeat in the north-western regions Pushyamitra turned round towards the great Southern Ocean. Desiring to protect the Law of the Buddha the Yaksha Daṃṣṭrānivāsin made alliance with another Yaksha named Kṛimisena in order to combat the persecutor. At the moment when the latter was crossing the mountains with his army Kṛimisena threw down a huge boulder which buried the king together with his soldiers and chariots.

This legend rests undoubtedly on a basis of truth. Pushyamitra was attached to the old Vedic religion. He wanted to reinstate in honour the ancient rites, particularly the famous horse-sacrifice (*aśvamedha*) (Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* III. 2. 122). It is possible that his zeal in favour of orthodoxy had inspired in his mind the design of destroying the dissident sects. The *Aśokāvadāna* speaks of two defeats suffered by the king, one in the north-west, another in the south. He had been put to death and his army destroyed in course of an expedition in the

direction of the great southern ocean. These indications, as yet very vague, are in agreement with the evidence that points to the progress of two great conquerors about the same time viz. Menander in the north-west and Khāravela in the south. It appears that the date 150 B. C. marks approximately the end of the reign of Pushyamitra as well as the successes, possibly conjoint, of Kaliṅga and the Greeks[10].

The death of Pushyamitra restored the hopes of the Śramaṇas. Menander, due to his (foreign) origin, was ignorant of the religious quarrels of India. He appears to have proved himself benevolent to the disciples of Śākyamuni. Khāravela reveals himself to be a very tolerant king in the great Hathigumpha inscription. The triumph of these two princes must have been hailed by the Buddhists. If Pushyamitra had succeeded in restoring the empire of Aśoka, it would possibly have been all up with the (Buddhist) doctrine. The memory of these events promptly turned into legend. Saved from a great peril, the faithful called out for a miracle. It was related that a converted yaksha, too pious to soil his hands with blood, had charged his son-in-law to crush the persecutor. This story which ends with the death of Pushyamitra, is posterior to the events that had inspired him. If the chronology of the Purāṇas is accepted, it could not have been written at the earliest, before 148 B. C.

This date is one of the extreme limits in between which the redaction of the *Aśokasūtra* must be placed. Besides, archaeology enables us to fix a *terminus ad quem*. One of the notable characteristics of the decoration of the great stūpa of Sāñchi consists of a number of bas-reliefs representing subjects posterior to the Parinirvāṇa and specially scenes borrowed from the Aśokan cycle of legends. M. Foucher has identified on the southern gate a sculpture of the 'war of relics' and a panel representing the visit of Aśoka to the stūpa of of Rāmagrāma. On the eastern gateway are to be found two other scenes borrowed from the legend of the same king. 'The one at the back of the lower lintel must also have reference to the stūpa of Rāmagrāma. As for the other, on the facade of the same block, we cannot escape the conclusion that this solemn procession to the Bodhi Tree is but a figurative representation, if not a direct

illustration of a passage of the *Aśokāvadāna*' (Foucher *Le Stūpa de Sāñchī* p. 30).

Is it imaginable that the sculptors would have taken the liberty to set up these novel historical scenes in a sanctuary by the side of the spectacles of traditional piety, if they had not been in some manner authorised to do so by the example of the writers? Buddhist iconography like that of the Christian middle ages, draws its inspiration directly from the Scriptures. For a sculptor to have ventured to represent scenes posterior to the time of Śākyamuni on a stūpa, it was required that he should have no objection to include narratives from the Sūtras, among them. The representation of scenes borrowed from the Deeds of Aśoka would therefore presuppose the existence, and even the popularity of the *Aśokasūtra*.

The archaeologists are not in agreement regarding the date of the erection of the monumental gateways of Sāñchī M. Foucher places them sometime in the second century B.C. (*Le Stūpa de Sāñchī* p. 12), while according to Sir John Marshall these could not have been older than the second half of the first century B.C. (*M A. S. I.* No. 1, 1919 p. 15). At all events, there is no considerable risk of a mistake if it is admitted that the *Aśokasūtra* had been written sometime between 150 and 50 B C.

Sir John Marshall assigns the sculptures on the balustrade of Barhut to the middle of the second century B.C. The decoration of the monumental gateway here, is, according to him, later (*M. A. S. I*, No. 1. 1919 p. 15). These embellishments were necessarily preceded by important works of construction. They presuppose the existence of a prosperous (Buddhist) community and even of a School of Buddhist art. How could the stupa of Barhut, situated in the empire of the Śuṇgas, exist contemporaneously with a prince who is represented to us as a cruel persecutor (of Buddhism) pulling down (Buddhist) sanctuaries and putting to death (Buddhist) monks?

In India it is difficult to imagine the existence of perfectly centralised empires before the Christian era when parochialism seems to have been the prevailing pattern in polity. Aśoka is probably the monarch who had made the nearest approach to

that political ideal; his realisation of it was pretty nearly complete. As far as it is known, his empire comprised at least two viceroyalties viz. the one at Takshaśilā and the other at Ujjayinī[11]. During the time of Pushyamitra, the empire, menaced by powerful neighbours, had grown smaller. Probably at that time the central power was weaker than it was during the reign of Aśoka. This seems to be implied by the following statement of the *Aśokāvadāna*. The king massacred the Arhats of the country of Śākala. 'But he encountered opposition and did not push his destructive enterprise further'. (*Divayāvadāna* p. 434 ; Burnouf. *Introduction a l'histoire de Bouddhism Indien* p, 431). This piece of evidence shows that the authority of the Śuṅga ruler was being exercised with difficulty at the extremities of his empire. What passed in the north-west could have equally happened in the south and south-west more especially as these regions do not appear to have been administered directly by the Magadhan king. The drama *Mālavikāgnimitra* shows that during the classical epoch those times were remembered when Vidiśā and the adjoining regions had formed a distinct viceroyalty under Agnimitra, the son of Pushyamitra.

The fact that the south-western provinces had enjoyed a large measure of autonomy under a local ruler who was practically independent, agrees quite well with certain indications of the famous Hathigumpha inscription. When, in the 8th year of his reign, Khāravela sacks the fortress on mount Goradha[12] he does not mention his adversary by name and his march appears to be directed towards the north-west. The two cities afterwards named in the inscription are respectively Rājagriha and Mathurā. Four years later the Ganges was reached and on this occasion Khāravela mentions the king of Magadha. The fact behind these separate developments referring the names of Rajagriha and Mathurā on the one hand, and the king of Magadha with his capital then at Pataliputra, on the other, to two different dates,—appears to indicate that two politically, distinct regions are being spoken of (cf. *J. B. O. R. S.* IV. p. 377). One may therefore presuppose the existence of a viceroyalty comprising Rājagriha, Kauśāmbī, Mathurā and Vidiśā, that is to say, the part of the Śuṅga empire situated to the south-west of the Ganges The weakness of the central power

in the regions far removed from the capital enables us to understand why the persecution (of the Buddhists) so severe at Pāṭaliputra, had been much less in volume in the country of Śākala and also why it had never been able to arrest the progress of Buddism in the provinces lying south-west of the Ganges. Besides, it would be realised that Agnimitra did not care to enfeeble his position by persecuting his Buddhist subjects as he watched the great rise in the power of the Andhras and the Kaliṅgas in the south, and he had adopted a tolerant policy analogous to the one followed by Khāravela. Expelled from their monasteries, the Śramaṇas of Pāṭaliputra found refuge in the principality of Agnimitra and the communities of Kauśāmbī, Vidiśā and Mathurā must have notably increased in number. Thus the artistic and literary movements that produced the *Aśokasūtra*, the *Aśokāvadāna* and the great monuments of Barhut and Sāñchī, are partly accounted for. The same process of explanation would clear up and specify one of the most important events in the history of Buddhism. It has already been noticed that the stories of the Councils testify to profound changes having taken place in the internal condition of the Church. During the early centuries the influential communities are all to be found in the east. Afterwards there occurs a rupture in the equilibrium the results of which appear clearly in the 12th Khandhaka of the *Chullavagga* : the centre of gravity has passed to the west ; Kauśāmbī and the hermitage of Śāṇavāsi have become two of the principal centres of spiritual life. It would doubtless be an exaggeration to attempt to derive from a single cause a movement of such an amplitude. It should however be realised that Pushyamitra's persecution could have been one of the determining factors behind it. The destruction of the monasteries of Pāṭaliputra and the neighbouring regions must have given a rude blow to what we have called the Eastern Church. The Kukkuṭārāma monastery[13] of the capital city which owed its pre-eminence above all to the religious zeal of Aśoka, must have been destroyed after the fall of the Mauryas. Since then the communities of Kauśāmbī and Mathurā had always been to certain extent ahead of their rivals,

In short, the reign of Pushyamitra appears to have marked the beginning of an era of decentralisation in the history of Buddhism. From now on the Magadhan period is closed. The propagation of the Law towards the north-west and south-west received a new impulse. Down to the end of the Maurya period, that is to say, till about the beginning of the second century B. C., Magadha had remained the centre of Buddhist propaganda. For sometime, it may be believed, the northern communities of Vaiśālī and Śrāvastī were sure of their premier rank in the Buddhist world[14]. But after the conversion of Aśoka this centrifugal movement was temporarily checked. Pāṭaliputra served as a sort of counter-balance to the northern communities ; the Magadhan capital became afresh the metropolis of Buddhism. While the traditions were still in an incessantly fluid state, the new influences found expression specially in the renovation of the legend of Yaśas, the ascetic of the Vṛiji country, who ultimately became the abbot of Kukkuṭārāma and counsellor of Aśoka.

The intolerant Brāhmaṇa Pushyamitra had inaugurated a novel religious policy. The Buddhists were persecuted in those regions where the royal authority was directly exercised. Hunted out of Pāṭaliputra the monks took refuge far away from the capital, probably around Nepal and Kashmir, and also undoubtedly in the provinces beyond the Ganges, in the valley of the Yamunā where Agnimitra tolerated them. This initiated a new era marked in the domain of literature by the redaction of the *Aśokasūtra* and the *Aśokāvadāna* and in the domain of the plastic arts by the embellishments of the great stūpas of Barhut and Sāñchī. This phase in the history of religion and art which we have proposed to call the Mathurā period, can be more accurately designated the "Mathurā-Kauśāmbī Period". Although each of these centres manifested nearly opposite tendencies, they reacted profoundly upon each other. If the followers of the Sutra at Mathurā, who were the promoters of the Sarvāstivādin movement, proved themselves solicitous of their doctrinal independence, they did not disdain to draw inspiration from the principal books of their rivals. An analysis of the *Aśokāvadāna* shows the influence of the Kauśāmbī School radiating up to Mathurā. It is desirable that in near

future, the reciprocal activities of these two centres of civilisation should be brought to light more thoroughly by new monographs on literary works as well as by comparative studies of sculptured monuments.

NOTES

1. In his article 'The Buddhist Council at Rājagṛiha and Vesāli' in the *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 1908, p. 59ff., Dr. Otto Franke has sought to explain the formation of the episode of Channa. His remarks, frequently ingenius, take into account some details, but in my opinion, leave in the dark the profound and truly determining causes. It is not enough to say (p 62): "This clothes story is placed at Kosāmbi because the Ghoshitārāma, in which Channa dwells, was near Kosāmbi, and Channa dwells there because he does so in C. V. I. 25, 1." What is really important is to find out whether the redactor of *Chullavagga* XI had not some reason to be interested in Channa and the Ghositārāma.

2. Burnouf has already noticed this (*Introduction* p. 311). Cf. *Sutta-nipāta* verses 274, 406, 464 etc.

3. Recent excavations have proved that the origins of the city of Ujjayinī go back to the middle of the eighth century B. C. . It played a significant role in the political and cultural history of India down to the thirteenth century A. D. When it was sacked by Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi—*Translator*.

4. Otto Franke *Pāli und Sanskrit* p. 138.

5. Evidence of Buddhist literature in general and the Pāli Canon* in particular points unmistakably to the contemporaneity of kings Chaṇda-Pradyota Mahāsena of Avanti, Udayana of Vatsa, Prasenajit of Kosala and Bimbisāra and his son Ajātaśatru of Magadha with one another as well as with the Buddha. This is now generally accepted by scholars and the synchronism is regarded as a sheet-anchor of pre-Mauryan chronology (cf. D. R. Bhandarkar *Carmichael Lectures* 1918, Calcutta 1919, p. 57 ; Lous de la Vallée poussin *Indo Europeens Indo-iraniens L'Inde jusque vers 340 av. J. C* Paris 1936. pp. 226-33 ; H. C. Raychaudhuri *Political History of Ancient India*. 5th ed Calcutta 1950, pp. 199-204 ; B. C. Law *Tribes in Ancient*

India'Poona 1943, p. 137). There is no convincing evidence however that king Chaṇḍa Pradyota Mahāsena of Avantī or king Udayana of Vatsa had known the Buddha personally. The latter never visited Avanti and the stories regarding his journey to the Vatsa country have been doubted on reasonable grounds (cf. E. J. Thomas *The Life of Buddha* London, 1949, p. 115 n)—*Translator.*

6. Cf *Les Seize Arhat Protecteurs de la Loi* p. 90. In course of the following discussion I have very largely utilised the texts collected by Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes. I refer the reader once for all to their admirable Memoir.

7. The references are to the text of the *Milindapñho* edited by V. Trenckner (London & Edinburgh, 1880)—*Translator.*

8. The author has made a somewhat free translation of the original passage which runs :

   Anupavādo anupaghāto pātimokkhe cha saṃvaro
   mattaññutā cha bhattasmiṃ panthañcha sayanāsanaṃ
   adhichitte cha ayogo ettaṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ

   Dhammapada verse 185.—*Translator.*

9. It is to be noted that though the Pāli *Udāna* attributes to Piṇḍola the origin of verse 185 of the *Dhammapada*, neither the late *Aṭṭhakathā* nor the commentaries of the *Dhammapada* available in Chinese and Tibetan, mention Piṇḍola in connection with the same verse (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 88). It is therefore only among the Sthaviras and during a limited period that the memory of Piṇḍola had been associated with verse 185 of the *Dhammapada.*

10. This date for Khāravela is not accepted by a band of scholars who would place the Kaliṅga ruler in the first century B. C. Cf. H. C. Raychaudhuri *Political History of Ancient India* (5th ed.) pp. 373-77, 418-21, D. C. Sircar *Select Inscriptions* Vol. I (Calcutta, 1942) p. 206n.—*Translator.*

11. Aśoka's empire consisted *at least* of *five* provinces and Tosali, Suvarṇagiri, Ujjayinī and Takshaśilā seem to have been the respective headquarters of four prince-viceroys. Cf. Raychaudhuri *Political History of Ancient India* (5th ed.) pp. 287-88, 316,—*Translator.*

12. Goradhagiri is on the old route from Rājagṛiha to Pāṭaliputra. Cf. J, B. O. R. S. III, Part IV p. 449.

13. There existed another Kukkuṭārāma near Kauśāmbī. It may be tenatively admitted that this similarity of names was not fortuitous and there was originally some place (of the same name) between the Kukkuṭāıāma of Pāṭaliputra and that of Kauśāmbī.

14. Cf. *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha* J. A. 1918 II pp, 455-56.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CYCLE OF AŚOKAN LEGENDS

Till now we have discussed the legend of Aśoka only under the form in which it is presented in the *Aśokasūtra* and the *Aśokāvadāna*. In Buddhist literature there are however other texts on the same subject. Aśoka having contributed more than any other monarch to the diffusion of Buddhism, his memory remained alive among the religious communities. His legend developed differently in different regions. As collected by the writers these local traditions have been partly preserved for us. Their sum-total constitutes what may be called the Aśokan Cycle of legends. Their detailed comparison calls for an exhaustive treatment and furnishes the material for a voluminous memoir. For various reasons, it would not be altogether useless to give here a brief summary of it.

We have so far endeavoured to localise the *Aśokāvadāna* in time and place. The results to which the analysis of the work has led us, must now be faced along with the lessons derived from the study of other texts. The comparison of the diverse aspects of the legend is necessary in order to decide whether the *Aśokāvadāna* really possesses in the history of Buddhist literature the geographical and chronological significance we have assigned to it.

Besides, it may be kept in mind, that the contents of the *Aśokāvadāna* had continued to grow through the ages. The A.W.Ch. concludes with a collection of stories all of which belong to the Asokan cycle, but appear to have been borrowed from the writings of different schools by a compiler of a later age. We shall be able to determine the sources of this small anthology (cf. *infra* Chapter IX) only after having distinguished the principal aspects of the legend of Aśoka that developed in the different regions of India.

The reign of Aśoka is briefly recounted in the history of Tāranātha. The events are classified there in the following *avadānas*: (1) The youth of Aśoka; (2) his conversion;

(3) the submission of the nāgas; (4) the erection of stūpas; (5) the assembly of monks; (6) offerings made to the Saṃgha; (7) Kuṇāla. The first six *avadānas* give a connected life-sketch of Aśoka from his youth down to the excessive gifts made by him which in many chronicles mark the end of his life. These six *avadānas* correspond in spite of accute differences, to chapters 1, 2, 3 and 6 of the A.W K. But while the *Aśokāvadāna* incorporates into the story of the great king, the biographies of his younger brother Vītāśoka and his son Kuṇāla, in the summary of Tāranātha the legend of the younger brother is absent and that of Kuṇāla is relegated to the end. Further Yaśas appears frequently in the account of Tāranātha, but neither Piṇdola, nor Upagupta is mentioned. Now, the introduction of these two saints into the Cycle of Aśokan legends is due to the writers of Kauśāmbī and Mathurā while the character of Yaśas belongs to the basic framework of the legend Prima facie it appears as if Tāranātha's chronicle had sprung directly from the old Aśoka-Saga elaborated at Pāṭaliputra, After the Magadhan period the tradition became bifurcated and the different elements of the legend had been swept off to different directions. A more detailed examination seems to confirm this hypothesis.

We must start however by setting aside an objection : it shall probably be said that it is improper to institute a comparison between a relatively modern work of a Tibetan chronicler and an Indian text like the *Aśokasūtra* composed before the Christian era. It should be noted that Tāranatha is not an original writer. He simply collects together documents which were probably very old. We do not always know the sources of his information, but in the present case he has taken care to indicate it himself. He refers to the *Śrāvaka-Piṭakas* as well as to two works of Kshemendra, one of these being an historical text of which he forgets to mention the title and the other a well-known collection of stories viz. the *Avadānakalpalatā* (cf. Tāranatha's *History* trans. Schiefner p. 40). In Mahāyāna literature the expression *Śrāvaka-Piṭaka* stands for the three separate Hīnayāna Piṭakas,—the Sūtra, the Vinaya and the Abhidharma, as distinguished from the *Bodhisattva-Piṭaka* (cf. *Les Seize Arhat*

p. 20). Just as a section of the *Aśokāvadāna* has ultimately been incorporated into the *Samyuktāgama* of the Sarvāstivādins, it is possible that another redaction of the Aśoka-legend —the same that Tāranātha summarises, has been inserted in the cannon of another sect. This is what the reference to the *Śrāvaka-Piṭakas* appears to imply.

The historical work of Kshemendra mentioned by Tāranātha has not come down to us for all we know. But there cannot have been any doubt regarding the identity of its author. He is the celebrated Kashmirian writer who lived in the eleventh century. In the absence of Tāranātha's testimony, what we possess of Kshemendra's own work, suffices to prove that the latter knew a biography of Aśoka analogous to the one that was utilised later by the Tibetan Chronicler. Pallavas 73 and 74 of the *Avadānakalpalatā* entitled *Nāgadūtapreṣana* and *Prithivīpradāna* correspond respectively to *avadanas* 3 and 6 of Tāranātha's summary. Had the historical work of Kshemendra been preserved for us, we would certainly have found there a complete biography of Aśoka of which he has only given a few extracts in the *Avadānakalpalatā.*

Judged by those of his works known to us, Kshemendra appears above all to have been a clever versifier[1]. He has summarised in verse the great epic poems as well as the *Bṛihatkathā.* His historical work like his collection of stories undoubtedly limited itself to the reproduction of older narratives in an agreeable form. Drawing heavily from earlier literature he had never any scruple about mixing up heterogeneous traditions. Pallavas 70-72 of the *Avadānakalpalatā* referring to Śāṇavāsa, Madhyāntika and Upagupta, appear to be inspired by the section on the lives of the saints in the *Aśokāvadāna* while the next two pallavas are borrowed from quite a different redaction of the Aśoka-legend. Written in the north-western region of India during an epoch when Buddhism was in full decadence[2], the *Avadānakalpalatā* is the meeting ground of two traditions. With a biography of Aśoka drawn from a canonical text it mixes a number of narratives inspired by the *Aśokāvadāna*[3]. Similarly in the body of Tāranātha's comparatively modern account we can point through the medium of Kshemendra, to

a class of much earlier writings. Is it tantamount to say that the biography of Aśoka inserted in the *Śrāvaka-Piṭakas* is also as early as the *Aśokasūtra*? There are various reasons to doubt this.

In the narrative of Tāranātha (p. 38 of Schiefner's translation) Aśoka is found to summon the monks of Aparāntaka Kashmira and Tukhāra to an assembly of *pañchavarṣa*. The last named country had opened itself to Buddhism only under the Kushāns. A narrative which shows the monks of Tokhāristan as constituting an important fraction of the Saṃgha, must therefore have been written or at least recast after the beginning of the Christain era.

In the episode of the submission of the nāgas (p. 33 of Schiefner's translation of Tāranātha's *History*) Aśoka is seen rendering homage to the statue of the Buddha. This feature likewise points to the Kashmirian period at the earliest, for before the rise of the Graeco-Buddhist School of art (of Gandhāra) artists avoided building images of the Buddha.

Further, certain events that hold a prominent place in the legend, presuppose the existence of conceptions much more developed than those indicated by the *Aśokāvadāna* as well as *Aśokasūtra*. This is particularly true of the episode entitled "Submission of the Nāgas" (avādana 3 of Tāranātha and pallava 73 of the *Avadānakalpalatā*).

According to the *Aśokāvadāna* the great monarch desiring to procure for himself the Buddha-relics enclosed in the eight primitive stūpas, approached the nāga kings of Rāmagrāma; but the latter expressed the desire of preserving the relics and Aśoka had to give up the project. This incident is quite unexpected, for it is the usual custom to represent a Chakravarti ruler as a sovereign capable of imposing his will on all beings. Nevertheless it is necessary to remember that the above notion would be correct only with reference to a particular epoch. Originally the Chakravartin was undoubtedly a king more powerful than his neighbours, exercising his supremacy over a moderately extended territory. Afterwards this genuine notion passed into the realm of legend; popular imagination conceived of fabulous rulers who were masters of the universe, commanding all categories of creatures. Since Aśoka's obtaining of the

relics from the nāgas depended solely on the latter's will to deliver them, it is necessary to admit that the *Aśokasūtra* des. cribing the episode, must have been written during a period when the power of the Chakravartin was by no mean sunlimited.

The account of the visit to the nāga kings of Rāmagrāma is reproduced without considerable modification in three recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* ; the fourth one that was inserted in the *Tsa-a-han* (*Saṃyuktāgama*) has introduced an innovation on this point : the king here succeeded in getting hold of the relics. It appears that during the epoch when the *Samyuktāgama* had been compiled, one no longer recognised any limit to the power of the Chakravartins.

In the narrative of Tāranātha the episode of the nāgas has been considerably developed. The merchants who return from the island of Jewels with a rich cargo of precious stones, find their riches carried off by the nāgas. They appeal to the king to subjugate the robbers. On the advice of a saint, Aśoka, whose merits are still insufficient, decides to render homage to to the Buddha-image and to the *chaityas*, as well as to receive sixty thousand Arhats in his palace. The vanquished nāgas resign themselves to the restoration of the precious stones. The king then undertakes new conquests which make him the master of the universe ; he annexes to his empire regions beyond the Vindhyas and the Himālayas, as well as fifty small *dvīpas*. Afterwards he collects the relics of the Tathāgata, constructs 84,000 chaityas and makes rich offerings to the Bodhi Tree. This episode illustrates the gradual progress of Aśoka's power. In the beginning the king is master only of the region lying between the Vindhyas and the Himālayas ; the nāgas are not subordinate to his rule. At this stage he is represented as not more powerful than he was in the early recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna*. But his power increases along with his merits and he finishes by bringing under his subjection the whole universe including thd nāga kings of the ocean. From that time his power becomes unlimited. Judged by the versions of Tāranātha and the *Avadānakalpalatā* the legend inserted in the *Śrāvakā-Piṭakas* is thus more developed than that of the *Aśokasūtra* ; it is of the same plan as the *Tsa-a-han* which contains one of the latest recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna*.

In the account of Tāranātha Yaśas is usually the adviser of Aśoka ; it is to him that Aśoka appeals immediately after his conversion for the expiation of his sins (avadāna 2) and later it is on his advice that he erects 84000 *chaityas* (avadāna 4). However, the third avadāna, entitled "The Submission of the Nāgas" is an exception. In this episode Yaśas is no longer the counsellor of the king ; another Arhat named Indra takes his place[4]. The criterion which has enabled us to distinguish different strata of tradition in the *Aśokāvadāna*, proves valuable also here. Avadānas 2 and 4 correspond probably to old stories of the Aśoka-Saga elaborated at Pāṭaliputra while the third avadāna is an innovation.

In which region was the legend put into a definite permanent shape ? Various indications lead us to think that before being incorporated in to the *Śravaka-Piṭaka* and rehandled and remoulded by the writers of the north-west, it was drawn up originally in the country lying to the east of Magadha.

According to the *Aśokāvadana* Aśoka was the son of Bindusāra and the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa of Champā. In the account of Tāranātha he is represented as the son of king Nemita, sovereign of Champārṇa. Schiefner (p. 26). sees in the second word a contraction of the two names Champā and Karṇa which stand for an old city as well as a kingdom to the east of Magadha. To represent the father of Aśoka as having reigned at Champā is a singularly audacious alteration of historical truth. This feature could have been imagined only by a story-teller belonging to the country, east of Magadha.

According to the *Aśokāvadāna*, during his youth Aśoka had subdued the Khasas and the country of Takshaśilā. In Tāranāth's narrative he is found to subdue the Khasas and the land of Nepal. In this case too the tradition has deviated towards the direction of the east.

The third avadāna in Tāranāth's account commences with the story of a journey to the Jewel-island ; the merchants beseech Aśoka's support against the nāgas. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* informs us that one embarked at Tāmralipti for the destination of Ratnakūṭa or the "Jewel-Mountain" (*Kathāsaritsāgara* VII, 36, trans, Tawney I pp. 328-29). The great port on the mouth

of the Ganges lay between Magadha, Champā and the rich countries accross the seas ; and the account of voyages in which the hardy navigators had to defend themselves against the sea-monsters, entered the folklore of the neighbouring Indian provinces of the area.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the sthavira Yaśas is the abbot of the Kukkuṭārāma monstery near Pāṭaliputra. In Tāranātha's narrative too he dwells in the Kukkuṭārāma but the monostery is situated in the country lying to the east of Magadha[5]. This new deformation of the legend is analogous to the one that had made Aśoka's father a sovereign of Champā.

These facts, corresponding to what we already know, tend to prove that the Deeds of Asoka elaborated originally at Pāṭaliputra, spread in two opposite di:ections. Towards the west it struck root first at Kauśambī from where it had later arrived at Mathurā. In the east it was propagated in the region situated between Magadha and the sea ; it was there enriched by new elements from the folklore of the neighbouring provinces ; a sufficiently late work, it has been incorporated in to the canon of the local sects and transferred afterwards to Kashmir where it was set in verse by Kshemendra. One can sum up the history of these vicissitudes by means of the following diagram :

The Deeds of Aśoka (Pāṭaliputra)

Aśokasūtra (Kauśambī)

Aśokāvadāna (Mathurā)

Avadānakalpalatā (Kashmir)...... Śrāvaka-Piṭaka (Champā)

The Tokyo edition of the Tripiṭaka contains a sūtra in verse, entitled *A-yu-wang-tseu-Fa-yi-hoai-mu-yin-yuan-king* or the 'Sūtra narrating the circumstances in which Fa-yi, the son of Aśoka had been deprived of sight.' Fa-yi is the Chinese rendering of *Dharmavivardhana* another name of Kuṇāla. In brief, we shall call it the *Kuṇālasūtra*. The original consisted of 343 ślokas. The Chinese translation was made in 384 A.D, by Dharmanandī (Nanijo No. 1367, cf. Tripiṭaka, ed. Tokyo, XXIV, 10 pp. 64b-72b). In fact this sūtra introduces

many episodes of the Aśoka-legend into the life of Kuṇāla which serves as its basis.

The departure of the young prince for Takshaśilā is explained here in a manner quite different from that of the *Aśokāvadāna*. He does not go there to suppress any revolt at all. The King of Gandhāra is dead. The inhabitants of the locality place themselves spontaneously under the authority of Aśoka. The latter deputes his son to govern them. Next follows a pompous eulogy of Gandhāra. Under the administration of Dharmvivardhana the Law of the Buddha is piously observed and the country knows the same high prosperity as Aśoka had decided to bestow on the world. The latter retains for himself that part of his empire extending from the Himālayas to the ocean ; the other half from the Indus to China is attributed to Kuṇāla.

This account presupposes the existence of a great empire beyond the Indus where the Law of the Buddha flourished and the capital of which was situated in Gandhāra. It must have been written under the Kushans and probably by one of their subjects. The eulogy showered on Gandhāra, the care taken to avoid all allusions to a revolt occuring in that country, are so many indications that enable us to fix the residence of the writer in tne north-western region. The north-western origin of the writer explains the importance attributed by him to prince Dharmavivardhana who is represented not only as the governor of Takshaśilā but also as reigning supreme over half of Jambudvīpa. The panegyric of the prince and his kingdom is after all a means of bringing on a par the empire of the Indo-Scythians and that of Aśoka. The two powers divided the world between themselves and Kuṇāla who is supposed to haveo pened Central Asia to Buddhism as Kanishka did later, became the principal personage of the legend to the extent that his story served as the frame-work of the Deeds of Aśoka.

From these features one recognises the work to have been composed during the Kashmirian period. The events too appear to belong to the same epoch. Whereas in the *Aśokaavadāna* Asoka's son remains blind, the *Kuṇālasūtra* relates the story of his recovery. The 45th narrative of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* rests on

an analogous theme. The son of the king of China is blind. The merchants of Takshaśilā say to the king, "There is in the foreign land a bhikshu named Ghosha. He can cure him." The king sends his son to Gandhāra where the latter is converted and cured by the monk. It is quite possible, even probable, that this story as well as the subject-matter of the *Kuṇālasūtra* had been imagined because the medicine of the Greeks of Bactria and of Takshaśilā had the reputation of curing blindness[6]. Among a people who had no knowledge of the operation of cataracts, cure of blindness could not have been familiar. But since the time when the possibility of restoring sight to the blind was foreseen, this system of cure, however rare in practice, had become a theme of stories. The faith in the action of the mind on the body came to be mingled with it and in this way the notion developed that conversion or spiritual illumination could remove blindness. Be that as it may, the existence of two legends is clearly established, both being directly allied to each other and localised in Gandhāra. Ghosha simultaneously cured and converted the son of the king of China by rubbing the latter's eyes with the tears shed by persons present during the recitation of a sutra. The prince obtained the results of the *Śrotāpanna* stage and declared : "Both the eye of my intelligence and my eyes of flesh have become pure. The greatest of the eye-doctors does not surpass the great rishi "(*Sūtralaṃkāra* trans. Huber, p. 216). Likewise in the *Kuṇālasūtra* Sumanas cures the son of Aśoka saying, "Take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṃgha as well as in your venerable masters, the Buddhas of the past and in those of the times to come ...." (*Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XXIV, 10 p. 68b, Col. 18).

In the *Kuṇālasūtra* the venerable Sumanas holds the premier place among the clergy. The saints of the earlier tradition have disappeared and Sumanas is found to replace them ; the latter has completely usurped the role and dignity of Yaśas. It is he who predicts here the destiny of Dharmavivardhana and converts Aśoka. It is of him that the king asks for the cure of his son. The cured prince embraces (the Buddhist) religion under the direction of Sumanas. Finally the *Kuṇālasūtra* terminates with a long sermon of Sumanas

on the five *gatis* or journeys of beings followed by the entry of the Venerable One and his royal disciple into Nirvāṇa.

This is not however tantamount to say that Yaśas had been totally forgotten. His name had remained associated with that of Aśoka for too long a period in public memory for anybody to have been able to separate them easily. He continues to be one of the principal personages of the legend ; but as he has no longer any part to play in the monastic world, he has been relegated to the sphere of the laity. He is now the prime minister of Aśoka and evil intentions have been attributed to him so that he may appear in the role of dramatic opposition to the virtuous Sumanas. It is this treacherous counsellor who suggests to the king the worst actions. Through this, once more the *Kuṇālasūtra* links itself up with the Kashmirian School. Narrative 16 of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, the same avadāna of the "Head of the Dead,' which was a late addition to the *Aśokāvadāna* (cf. *Divyāvadāna* pp. 382-84), thus describes the character of Yaśas : "At that time the King (Aśoka) had a minister called Yaśas who was a heretic without faith" (*Sūtrālaṃkāra* trans. Huber p. 91)[7].

In short, during the Kashmirian epoch the legend of Aśoka is found to be characterised by the pre-eminence of two ancient personages, Dharmavivardhana the son of Aśoka who becomes the equal of his father, and Yaśas who appears as a layman instead of as a monk and whose role as a virtuous counsellor is changed into that of an impious minister. Transported to the north-western region, the Aśoka-Saga was greatly altered, yet not to the extent that would make the relationship between the *Aśokāvadāna* and the *Kuṇālasūtra* non-recognizable. It is always the same traditional stream which under different names and aspects points from the direction of Magadha towards Gandhāra.

In the remarkable 'Introduction' to his edition of the *Dīpavaṃsa*, H. Oldenberg has shown that the two Singhalese chronicles *Dīpavaṃsa* and *Mahāvaṃsa* as also the opening sections of the *Samanta-Pāsādika* rest on an earlier work entitled *Aṭṭhakathā-Mahāvaṃsa* of the Mahavihāra of Ceylon. This old chronicle must have contained an account of the reign of Aśoka which had been summarised by the author of the

Dīpavaṃsa towards the end of the fourth century, and a little later by Buddhaghosha in his Commentary on the Vinaya. In the beginning of the same century Mahānāma, the author of the *Mahāvaṃsa* dealt with the same subject, moreover with ample developments, drawn partly from the same source. These three narratives, obviously agreeing with one another, inform us as to the form in which the Aśoka-legend existed in the monasteries of Ceylon between the 4th and 6th centuries of the Christian era. If, as we have admitted, the *Aśokasūtra* was composed at Kauśambī by a writer belonging to the Sthavira sect before the beginning of the Christian era, one must expect to find the continuation of the tradition in the Ceylonese Buddhist works because the latter belonged to the same school. In case one adopts this hypothesis, it would have to be further assumed that arriving in Ceylon, at a great distance from the place of its origin after an interval of half a millennium, the Deeds of Aśoka must have assumed a form very different from what it had done at the time of departure, although preserving certain resemblance to the original. We shall presently see that this was really the case.

Even a superficial examination would enable us to separate certain elements with which the legend was embellished in course of its journey. The *Mahāvaṃsa* informs us that Aśoka had seduced during his youth the daughter of a rich bourgeois of Besnagar (ancient Vidiśā) (*Mahāvaṃsa* XIII, 8-12). This feature is obviously borrowed from a local legend[8]. Besides at the second stūpa at Sāñchī is enclosed a large number of urns one of which is supposed to contain the ashes of *Sapurisasa Mogaliputasa*. This saint is no other than the patriarch Tissa Moggaliputta who plays a very important part in the chronicles of Ceylon (Cunningham *The Bhilsa Topes* p. 289 and Geiger *The Mahāvaṃsa* p. XX)[9] He must have been the object of special honour in the region of Sāñchī since his relics are found to be venerated here. Besnagar and Sāñchī are two neighbouring localities in the ancient land of Vidiśā· It appears that the legend of Aśoka had imbibed new characteristics in this country.

According to the *Mahāvaṃsa* Aśoka was the vice-roi of

Ujjayinī during his youth ; while the *Aśokasūtra* and the *Kuṇālasūtra* make him start his administrative career at Gandhāra. The north and the south thus respectively lay claim to the honour of having been governed by the future Chakravartin. In a parallel manner, Mahinda (Mahendra), the son of Aśoka is seen receiving ordination and afterwards introducing Buddhism in Ceylon, in the Singhalese chronicles. In the *Kuṇālasūtra* Dharmavivardhana, the son of Aśoka is found to have spread the doctrine in Gandhāra and also to have ended his days as a monk. In this way the different events localised by the Saravāstivādins at Gandhāra, are placed by the Sthaviras either at Ujjayini or in Ceylon. On the whole it may be said, that certain features of the Singhalese tradition apparently spring from places like Besnagar, Sāñchī, Ujjayinī and the island of Ceylon itself. It is wellknown that during the time of Aśoka the route from Pāṭaliputra to Barygaza passed through Kauśāmbī, Vidiśā and Ujjayinī ; and tradition affirms that it is from Braygaza that the early navigators arrived in Ceylon (cf. *Dīpavaṃsa* IX, 26-28). Between Kauśāmbī, the cradle of the Sthaviravāda School, and Ceylon where that sect came to prosper later, the route was therefore marked out by Besnagar and Ujjayinī. It is significant that the Singhalese traditions contain elements borrowed from these regions.

If at the first sight certain innovations become visible in the body of the legend, it must be understood that the old fundamental parts of it can only be recognised after having been thoroughly separated from those later additions. The account of the *Mahāvaṃsa* being the most developed, is the one which lends itself most to a detailed analysis. The following episodes may be distinguished in this text : (1) the coronation of Aśoka ; (2) his conversion by the sāmanera Nigrodha ; (3) Aśoka and the nāga Mahākāla ; (4) history of the patriarchs from Upāli to Tissa Moggaliputta ; (5) the conversion of the younger brother of Aśoka ; (6) Mahinda (Mahendra) in the island of Ceylon ; (7) interview of Aśoka and Tissa Moggaliputta ; (8) the meeting of the Third Council. The sixth episode dealing with the apostleship of Mahinda (Mahendra) in the island of Ceylon is, as we have just seen, an innovation introduced by the Singhalese chronicles. Episodes 4 and 7 recall

inevitably the processes at work in the text of the *Aśokāvadāna*. The author of the latter text desirous of exalting Upagupta, associates him with the Chakravartin Aśoka and further links him up with the Buddha through a series of four patriarchs. In the same manner the redactor of the legend incorporated in the Ceylonese chronicles, in order to glorify Tissa Moggaliputta imagines an interview between Aśoka and that patriarch and also connects the latter with the Buddha by a chain of four savants. The analogy extends itself even down to the details. Tissa dwells on the hillock Ahogaṅga, which in the earliest texts of the Pāli Canon as also in the *Mahāvaṃsa* (IV, 18), is the equivalent of mount Urumuṇḍa the hermitage of Śāṇavāsa and Upagupta. Tissa like Upagupta goes to Paṭaliputra by boat. The king approaches him and conducts him to his palace as he does Upagupta in the *Aśokāvadāna*. Episodes 4 and 7 of the *Mahāvaṃsa* obviously draw inspiration from a theory about the patriarchate which apart from the names of the new saints it adds, is almost a repetition of the theory found in the *Aśokāvadāna*. Excluding these two episodes as well as the sixth, we come upon a nucleus which can be compared with the *Aśokasūtra*.

According to the *Aśokāvadāna*, king Aśoka being in need of a jailer for his infernal prison, his men ransacked the country and ultimately discovered the merchant Girika for the purpose. In the same work, in the beginning of the episode of Kuṇāla, the king is found to cry out, " 'Let a *kuṇala* (bird) be brought'. Now, the yakshas listened to his orders from a distance of one *yojana*, from the sky and the nāgas listened to them (also) from a distance of one *yojana* from under the earth. Accordingly the yakshas brought him a *kuṇāla* that very instant" (*Divyāvadāna* p. 406 ; Burnouf *Introduction* p. 404). At the end of the episode of Vītāśoka another order of the great monarch is found to be executed in the same manner (*Divyāvadāna* p. 427). Thus in the same work the orders of the Chakravartin are seen to be executed sometimes by his men, sometimes by superhuman beings. These operations do not always follow the same plan. As we have already suggested (cf. *supra* pp. 109-10), the concept of the Chakravartin monarch appears to have developed during the same period that wit-

nessed the growth of the Aśoka-legend. The extremely archaic episode of the 'infernal prison' places at the service of the king only ordinary persons ; the legend of his son and his younger brother places nāgas and yakshas under his order. Much later the *Mahāvaṃsa* forcefully develops in detail the theme of the supernatural power of the Chakravartin. Immediately after the conversion of Aśoka, "his orders are heard from the distance of a *yojana* in the sky as well as in the subterranean world" (*Mahāvaṃsa* V. 23). Besides the *devas* bring him everyday the water of lake Anotatta, and tooth-picks and fruits from the Himālayas ; the *marūs* furnish him with cloth, the nāgas with lotus flowers and unguents ; the birds chant to please him ; the whole universe is at his service" (*Mahāvaṃsa* V. 24-33). In this respect the *Mahāvaṃsa* is an extension of the *Aśokāvadāna* and is of the same standard as that of the most developed parts of the narrative of Tāranātha (cf. *supra* p. 110).

The episode of the great king and the *nāga* Kāla in the *Mahāvaṃsa* is inspired by a short scene of the *Aśokāvadāna*. When Aśoka went on pilgrimage to the sacred places in the company of Upagupta, the latter showed him the spot where "Kālika the king of the nāgas had found the Bodhisattva who had been near the Bodhi Tree and had set about to sing his eulogies". Aśoka expressed the desire to see the nāga-king. "At once Kālika, the king of the nāgas appearing before the Sthavira Upagupta, said to him with palms joined in respect : 'Sthavira, what is thy command to me ?' Then the Sthavira said to the king : 'Here oh great king, is Kālika the king of the nāgas, who had sung the praise of Bhagavat when, seated under the Bodhi Tree, the latter had advanced in the path of salvation". Forthwith the King with his palms folded in respect spoke thus to Kālika, the king of the nāgas : 'Thou hast therefore seen him whose complexion equals the brilliance of molten gold, thou hast seen my incomparable master whose face resembles the autumnal moon. Expound to me a part at least of the qualities of the sage having the ten powers (*daśabala*) ; tell me what the splendour of the Sugata was like'. 'I cannot', the *nāga*, said, "express it in speech ; however judge it by this single utterance : 'Touched by the sole of his feet,

the earth with its mountains trembled in six different manners ; illuminated by the radiance of Sugata who raised himself like the moon above the world of men, it appeared beautiful and more resplendent than the rays of the sun'. After this conversation the king established a chaitya in that locality and retired" (*Divyāvadāna* p. 392 ; Burnouf *Introduction* pp. 387-88).

In the *Mahāvaṃsa* the nāga does not rest content merely by describing the splendour of the Buddha but he also brings forth an image of the Great Sage : "One day the sovereign heard people speak of Mahākāla, the king of the nāgas, possessed of marvellous powers, who had seen four Buddhas and had lived through a kalpa. He sent his men to search him out and to conduct him to his presence bound with a chain of gold. When he had him brought and made him sit on his throne adorned with a white canopy, he rendered him homage with numerous flowers and ordered six thousand women of the palace to form his entourage ; then he said : 'Make us see the countenance of the Great Sage who is omniscent, whose wisdom is unlimited and who has turned the Wheel of the True Law'. The nāga-king created a splendid image of the Buddha decorated with the thirty-two signs and shining with the eighty sub-signs......" (*Mahāvaṃsa* V. 87-92 : trans. Geiger p. 33).

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the nāga is seen obeying the orders of Upagupta ; in the *Mahāvaṃsa* the king is found to have the nāga conducted to his presence "bound with a chain of gold". Although in the two cases the basis of the story remains the same, it is only in the Singhalese redaction that the king acts really as a Chakravartin capable of commanding even the most powerful nāgas.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* Aśoka is brought by turns into communication with great saints like Yaśas, Piṇḍola and Upagupta : but his conversion there is the work of a simple bhikshu named Samudra whom the venture of his wanderings lands in the infernal prison. This episode appears to belong to the basic stratum of the legend (see *supra* pp. 118–119 and *infra* chapter vii) ; it is probably even earlier than the introduction of Yaśas into the Cycle of Aśokan legends and plunges its roots

into a remote past anterior to Buddhism itself. Having been in use for a long time the figure of Samudra afterwards lost its prominence and his name fell into oblivion. Ere long it was found that this anonymity was not without its advantage. It was an edifying spectacle to see the most powerful of monarchs to have been converted by an ordinary monk. The moment the value of this contrast was realised, it was sought to be accentuated. In the account of Tāranātha as in the Ceylonese chronicles it is no longer even an ordinary bhikshu that converts the great king ; it is a novice, a little *śrāmaṇera,*

The *Aśokāvadāna* relates that one day Vītāśoka, the younger brother of the king went deer-hunting. In the forest he met a solitary hermit and asked him, "What dost thou eat ?" "Fruits and roots," was the reply. "And what is thy dress ?" "Sheets made of the *darbha*". "And thy bed ?" "A covering of grass". "Is there any anguish that troubles thee in thy penitences ?" "Yes", replied the ṛishi, "the gazelles copulate in the mating season. Now, when I look at their frolics, I am consumed by desires." "If this anchorite", exclaimed Vītāśoka, "cannot even by his austere penitence, subdue his passions, what shall happen to the śramaṇas, the followers of the Scion of the Śākyas (*Śākyaputriyāh*) who look for spacious beds and seats ?" (*Divyāvadāna* p. 420 ; Burnouf *Introduction* p. 415). After this Aśoka succeeded in converting his younger brother by an ingenious strategem.

In the *Mahāvaṃsa* we get a brief summary of this episode : "One day, when the prince was out hunting, he saw the gazelles frolicking gaily in the jungle. Seeing this spectacle he thought, 'Even the gazelles that live on herbs in the jungle, indulge in joyous sport. How will it be possible for the bhikshus who enjoy food and lodging to their heart's content, not to be joyous and gay' ?" (*Mahāvaṃsa* V. 154-55). Afterwards Aśoka converted his brother in the same way as stated in the *Aśokāvadāna.*

The basic idea in the two fragments that we have proceeded to transcribe, is the same : How is it possible for the śramaṇas who live in abundance to master their senses ? But in the absence of the ancient text, the abridged version of the *Mahāvaṃsa* would be almost unintelligible. From an exaggerated

sentiment of modesty the Singhalese writer has concealed his model and has made only a tame copy of it.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the great king is seen convening the monks of the whole world to an assembly of *pañchavarṣa* (*pañchavārṣika*), before making his offerings to the Bodhi Tree. He is found to mount the terrace of his palace and facing the four points of the horizon, to exclaim : 'Let all those who are the Śrāvakas of the Blessed Buddha condescend to come as an act of favour to me.' Three hundred thousand monks responded to the appeal. Piṇḍola was the last to appear. The king offered to the assembly of monks, his wives, his ministers, his son Kuṇāla and even his own person, reserving for himself his treasure. And then he repurchased all these gifts for 400,000 (suvarṇas). Finally he had in the same manner donated 96,000 koṭi (suvarṇas) in the cause of the Law of Bhagavat, when he fell into a state of debility (*Divyāvadāna* p. 429 ; Burnouf *Introduction* p. 426).

The *History* of Tāranātha contains pretty nearly the same facts : Aśoka convened a great assembly of *pañchavarṣa* ; 300,000 bhikshus were present there. The king formed the design of giving 1000 million gold pieces ; he presented them with 960 million pieces and fell ill before being able to realise his project fully. The same events can also be discerned in the confused account of the *Dīpavaṃsa*. Aśoka here is found to make immense preparation for receiving the monks in a fitting manner (*Dīpavaṃsa* VI. 73-77). The assembly comprised 80 koṭi bhikshus and 96,000 bhikshuṇīs who had arrived from all parts of Jambudvīpa (VII. 1). The king distributed large offerings and dispensed with 96 koṭi (gold pieces) for the erection of monasteries (VI, 81-86 and 97). He went to the extent of offering his son Mahinda (Mahendra) and daughter Saṃghamittā (Saṃghamitrā) both of whom entered the Saṃgha (VII,19). But to these basic elements of the story the Ceylonese chronicle adds a new theme ; for confounding the heretics who had assembled in great numbers, Tissa Moggaliputta had assembled 60,000 disciples of the Buddha who composed the *Kathāvatthu* (VII, 56) ; and from among this multitude he had chosen 1000 Arhats who formed the Third Council (VII, 57-59). Thus the *Dīpavaṃsa* distin-

guishes two great reunions of the Saṃgha during the time of Aśoka : the one of 60,000 disciples of the Buddha preparatory to the Third Council, is convened by Tissa Moggaliputta ; the other, much more numerous was held under the patronage of the grand monarch, which corresponds to the great assembly of *pañchavarṣa* mentioned in the *Aśokāvadāna* and the *History* of Tāranātha. The two events very near and very similar to each other, were soon confounded. In the *Mahavaṃsa* only a single assembly is mentioned which is summoned by Aśoka and presided over by Tissa Moggaliputta who selected from its midst the Arhats of the Third Council.

To sum up, the author of the story, from which the Singhalese chronicles draw inspiration, has sometimes summarised, sometimes expanded the ancient Aśoka-Saga. Nevertheless the contents of his work can only be explained with reference to the *Aśokasūtra* and the *Aśokāvadāna.*

The stories forming the Cycle of Aśokan legends are all derived from an ancient nucleus, which spread itself over a vast area and found different expressions in different regions in the process. This primitive legend appears to have been developed among the Buddhist communities of the neighbourhood of Pāṭaliputra. From the capital of the Mauryas it was propagated towards the east as well as towards the west. In the region lying between Magadha and the outfall of the Ganges it continued to evolve till it came to be incorporated into the canon of a local sect. In the west it early found a permanent shape. Drafted at Kauśāmbī and afterwards completed at Mathurā it had attained considerable celebrity in that form. From these two centres which probably witnessed the births of the Sthavira and the Sarvāstivādin sects, the Aśoka-Saga radiated towards the south-west and the north-west upto Ceylon and Kashmir.

One can distinguish three phases in the development of the legend in course of its extension from Magadha to the north-west. First, in to the archaic account of the conversion of Aśoka by the bhikshu Samudra, came to be incorporated a series of episodes calculated to glorify Sthavira Yaśas, the abbot of Kukkuṭarāma. This is the Magadhan phase. Reaching Kauśāmbī and then Mathurā the legend formed itself into a

definite shape and increased in volume as a result of the acquisition of new elements. Piṇḍola and Upagupta are now brought into communication with the grand monarch. This is the Kauśāmbī-Mathurā phase. Finally, transported to the north-west, the legend renovated itself. Arhat Sumanas is found here to substitute the monks belonging to the earlier phase ; the character of the eminent Yaśas is changed ; and prince Dharmavivardhana comes to the forefront.

Some of the theses enunciated previously find confirmation from the above analysis. An examination of the relative traditions regarding the journey of the Buddha to the west, had suggested to us the distinctive characters of the three Schools of Magadha, Mathurā and Kashmir. The study of the accounts of the Councils and the lists of Patriarchs had given us concordant results. The analysis of the narratives constituting the Cycle of Aśokan Legends also leads to the same conclusions.

Moreover, the analogies presented by the *Kuṇalasūtra*, the *Aśokāvadāna* and the Ceylonese chronicles are easily explained in spite of the geographical distance and sectarian differences, if it is admitted that all these works draw inspiration from an original *Aśokasūtra* composed before the birth of Christ in the region of Kauśāmbī. From this centre where it had been early crystallised into a form that became promptly popular, the legend of Aśoka spread itself all at once over the domains of the Sthaviras and the Sarvāstivadins. After he had reproduced the *Aśokasūtra* almost entirely in his work, the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* was imitated in his turn by the writers of the Sthavira sect. The legend of Tissa Moggaliputta, such as it is narrated in the *Mahāvaṃsa* appears to have been modelled on that of the patriarch Upagupta.

NOTES

1. See the article of Sylvain Lévi on *Kshemendra* in the J. A. (1885-86).

2. Cf. Foucher *Kshemendra, Le Buddhavatāra* in the J. A. 1892, Tome II p. 174.

3. The influence of the *Aśokāvadāna* can be traced not only in pallavas 70-72 of the *Avadānakalpalatā*; it also manifests itself in the following narrative. Upagupta is mentioned in the later stanzas of pallava 73.

4. This Arhat is not named in Tāranātha's account. I have borrowed his name from the 73rd pallava of the *Avadānakalpalatā*; cf. *Indro nāmabravīd bhikshuḥ shaḍabhijnaḥ* ....(stanza 8).

5. The variations of the writers assigning to different regions the same personage or the same legendary scene, are particularly enlightening. In this respect the example of Yaśas deserves our attention. The account of the Second Council in the V. M. S. attributes to him a dwelling place near Vaiśālī. The *Aśokasūtra* transfers his residence to the neighbourhood of Pāṭaliputra. In *Chullavagga* XII he becomes one of the chiefs of the Church of the west; while the biography of Aśoka summarised by Tāranātha associates him with the region lying to the east of Magadha.

6. It is well-known that the Ionian (Yavana) physicians had attained a great celebrity. Treatises on medicine in the Ionian dialect are mentioned among the earliest books written in Greek prose. The famous Indian physician Jīvaka whom legend makes a contemporary of the Buddha, had learnt his art of healing at Takshaśilā. In a passage of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* which we have reproduced at some length, Aśvaghosha mentions the "eye-doctors".

7. Here is the corresponding phrase of the *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell & Neil p. 382) : *tasya cha Yaso namamātyaḥ parama-śrāddho Bhagavati.* Burnouf translates it : "He had as minister Yaśas who was full of faith in Bhagavat." (*Introduction* p. 374). From the analogy of the *Sūtra-laṃkara* I propose the following interpretation : "He had as minister Yaśas who had no faith in Bhagavat." (*param aśrāddho*).

8. Foucher *La porte orientale du Stūpa de Sañchī* p. 30.

9. This identification is not accepted by some modern scholars. Some of the names occurring on the Sāñchī Caskets are found also in inscriptions discovered from the stūpas of Sonari and Andher and this probably points to identity of the persons named. According to an Andher inscription Mogaliputa was a disciple of Gotiputa who has again been described as 'an heir and kinsman of Dudubhisāra' in a Sonari inscription. The latter is identified by some with the Dundubhissara of the *Dīpavaṃsa* (VIII. 10) whom the Ceylonese Mogāliputa Tissa sent with four other missionaries to the Himalayn region after the conclusion of the Third Council in the reign of Aśoka. The Mogaliputa mentioned on Casket IV coming from Stūpa 2 at Sāñchī would be according to this argument, a considerably later figure than the Ceylonese Mogāliputa Tissa. Cf. N G. Majumdar in Marshall and Foucher *The Monuments of Sañchī* Vol. I pp. 291-92,-*Translator.*

10. The expression in the original text is *pañchavārshika.* P. L. Vaidya explains it as "entertainment for five rainy months or years" (*Divyāvadānam* Buddhist Sanskrit Text Series No. 20, Darbhanga 1959, p. 538). It may however also refer to a quinquennial gathering of monks on the invitation of the king.-*Translator.*

CHAPTER VII

AŚOKA'S 'HELL'

On the occasions of their visits to the ruins of Pāṭaliputra, the great Chinese pilgrims Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang were shown the "hell of Aśoka". It was a prison constructed by the king a little before his accession where according to the legend, criminals were made to undergo horrible tortures. Fa-hien relates that Aśoka in course of his journeys to the distant corners of the world, had visited the residence of Yama and had formed the design of setting up near his capital a hell resembling that of the King of the dead[1]. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the story of the foundation of this prison-house is told in a different way : Aśoka's executioner named Girika, had planned the foundation of this torture-chamber while hearing a monk recite a sutra that described the torments of hell.

This is how Burnouf interprets the opening lines of the passage (*Introduction* p. 366) . "Chaṇḍa Girika went next to the hermitage of Kukkuṭārāma. There the monk Bālapaṇḍita was reading a sūtra .....". Burnouf's translation presupposes the following original text : *bhikshuścha Bālapaṇḍitaḥ sūtram paṭhati.* This reading has been admitted by the editors of the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 375). There is however one difficulty. Bālapaṇḍita is qualified by two adjectives viz ignorant and wise. One does not comprehend very well how these two contradictory epithets can be attached to the name of a single individual. The A. W. Ch. furnishes a better text : "A bhikshu was reading the sūtra of the ignorant and the wise...." Bālapaṇḍita would therefore be in the context not the name of a person but the title of a sacred text. This interpretation is certainly the correct one[2]. There exist in the Canon many texts baring this title. One is the 129th sūtra of the Pāli *Majjhima Nikāya* ; the 199th sūtra of the *Chong-a-han* or the Chinese translation of the *Madhyamāgama* is another. Both contain a description of the torments of hell,

The question is to find out to which of these sutras the

citation of the *Aśokāvadāna* refers. The comparison of the two canonical texts and the corresponding passage of the *Divyāvadāna* does not leave any doubt in this respect. The fragment of the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* inserted in the *Divyāvadāna* comprises five paragraphs in which the following torments are successively described : 1) the torture of the balls of iron ; 2) that of the molten copper ; 3) that of the iron-hoe ; 4) that of the iron-beater ; 5) that of the five shackles[3] (cf, Burnouf *Introduction* pp. 366-67). We rediscover in the *Chong-a-han* tortures 1, 2 and 5 arranged in the same order as in the Sanskrit text and described in the same manner. In the Pāli sutta on the contrary the first torture is that of the 'five shackles' and the rest deviates considerably from the Sanskrit text. The fragment inserted in the *Divyāvadāna* has its links not with the Pāli *Majjhima-Nikāya* but with the 199th sutra of the *Chong-a-than* a compendium which appears to be the translation into Chinese of the *Madhyamāgama* of the Sarvāstivādin School[4] (cf. *Majjhima Nikāya* ed. Chalmers III p. 166 and *Chong-a-han* Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo XII, 7, 61b).

The utterances attributed to the bhikshu of the Kukkuṭārāma are found to be considerably different in the A. W. K. and the A.W.Ch. The two recensions are not also in agreement over the title of the sutra that the monk recited. The A. W. Ch mentions like the *Divyāvadāna* a *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* while the A. W. K. refers to the *Ou-t'ien-che-king*, or the "Sutra of the five divine messengers" (*devadūtasūtra*). There is a sūtra of that name in the Pāli *Majjhima Nikāya* immediately following the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra.* Two analogous sūtras contained in the *Chong-a-han* are widely separated. The *Devadūta* is the 64th and the *Balapaṇḍita* the 199th sutra in this text.

The A. W. K. however does not give us a fragment *in extenso* of the *Devadūtasūtra*. It limits itself to the enumeration of a certain number of punishments and refers to the *Ou-t'ien-che-king* for details (*Tripiṭaka*, ed. Tokyo XXIV, 10, p. 31b, Col. 6).

On the other hand, the A. W. Ch claims to have reproduced the actual utterances of the monk of the Kukkuṭārma monastery. "There was at that time, in that monastery,

a bhikshu, who recited the Sūtra of the Ignorant and the Sage where it is said, 'Those who love the bubble of the cooking-pot shall be pounded with a pestle. Those who love all that is pounded in a vessel, shall be boiled in a cauldron Those who are in hell, swallow huge iron-balls and their mouths are soaked with molten copper..." (*Tripiṭaka* Tokyo ed. XXIV, 10, p. 3a, col. 19 ff).

The above passage is cited as if it has been literally drawn from a sūtra. However it is not found either in the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* or in the *Devadūtasutra* referred to above, nor in any other translation of these sutras, nor in the corresponding sūtra of the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarāgama* (Nanijo, no. 542). Since it is actually absent in all the known collections of the sacred texts, it may be tentatively considered a specimen of a very early description of hell now lost. This is how we can reconstruct the whole account : The author of the oldest Aśoka-Saga regarded as part of the Canon, a sūtra dealing with hell, that contained the afore-mentioned expressions on the punishment of gluttons ; this was a sutra which we shall tentatively call the *Nirayasūtra* in order to describe the significance of its basic idea. Later along with the change of religious notions the descriptions of hell had also been modified in the *Āgama*. Since then the accounts of the punishment of gourmands contained in the Aśoka-Saga, ceased to be a part of the Canon. These were omitted in most of the recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* and came to be included probably only by inadvertence in the work of which the A. W. Ch. is the translation.

This way of looking at the problem is corroborated by considerations of another kind. The *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* of the *Madhyamāgama* forms part of a section entitled *Mahāvarga*. Out of the ten sutras constituting that section, the first four are relating to prescriptions on food (Sylvain Lévi *Aśvaghosha* p. 137). Two others, the 7th and the 10th, also refer incidentally to food and the desire for food (*Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo, p. 59a, col. 9 and 13 and p. 67b, col. 1-4). We are thus led to suppose that originally the ten sūtras of the *Mahāvarga* corresponded directly or indirectly to the same subject, and had been grouped together for that reason. One should note in the same way

that the 4th sūtra is entitled, 'Chunda'. The disciple here mentioned is particularly well-known, for the indigestible food that he served to the Buddha a littlewhile before the Parinirvāṇa. The said feast is not mentioned in the *Mahāvarga*, but this may be due to the fact that the contents of the text have undergone changes. The presence of the *Chundasūtra* in a section formed principally of sermons on the subject of nourishment, reminds us that the story of the famous meal was not unknown to this collection. The same remark applies probably also to the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*. This is a description of hell never giving an impression at the first sight that passages on the subject of food are associated with it. But a closer scrutiny at once removes this erroneous notion. We read on p. 62a col. 13 : "The ignorant ones who during their past lives coveted the relish of food, who behaved ill with body, speech and mind...are born among animals." The same phrase is repeated five times on the same page. It mentions first a particular sin, and next a very general formula comprising an aggregate of all the possible sins. This redaction is not probably the result of a single effort. Gluttony is included among the sins of the body. In case it is analysed thoroughly, it would appear certain that it belonged to an ancient text on the abuses of food. Later it was generalised, and out of an original predication specially concerning gluttons, was developed a sūtra regarding all possible grades of sinners. We thus come upon a redaction which is hardly coherent and in which the first clause has a concrete and precise value presenting a contrast to the abstract general formula that follows immediately. It appears that the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* is actually the substitute of an earlier *Nirayasūtra* in which the torments of hell were described specially in order to frighten gluttons. This conclusion adjusts itself perfectly to the one that the citation preserved in the A. W. Ch. suggests to us.

To judge it by the same citation, the primitive *Nirayasūtra* must have reflected extremely archaic conceptions. The punishments with which it threatened the gluttons are of an excessively severe nature. Since one has been condemned to terrible punishment for being merely addicted to the pleasures of the palate, there is an obvious lack of proportion between

the fault and its punishment. It denotes a certain grossness of spirit and brutality of imagination. When the theologians set themselves to the task of refining the popular traditions, they did not fail to introduce a spirit of moderation into these barbaric injunctions. The *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* of the *Chong-a-han* testifies precisely to this. This text represents the gluttons as being reborn not in the various hells but among animals : they are reduced to fish living merely on water ; to herbivorous animals having nothing else to satisfy their hunger with than herbs from fields and leaves from trees ; or to animals leaving in the poultry-yard that are fed on filth (*Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XII, 7, p. 62a). The *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* thus marks a progress in comparison to the primitive *Nirayasūtra* ; it reserves for the worst type of criminals the terrible tortures of hell ; the gluttons according to it are reborn on earth with bodies of animals. For the primitive belief that knew for all the mortals no other dwelling place than the abode of Yama and proposed to cast all the evil-doers into hell, the more recent doctrine of transmigration of the soul substituted a juster notion of retribution for evil acts. The wicked, according to it, are reborn on the earth or in any other sphere of existence ; the less culpable ones among them get animal bodies, and the great criminals suffer tortures in hell.

From the *Devadūtasutta* to the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* we can also trace the same evolution of outlook. The first is a description of the kingdom of Yama ; the king of the dead is mentioned there almost in each line ; it is Yama who sends to living beings the 'divine messengers' in order to warn the former of the fate that awaits them. These mythological notions are the heritages of Vedic antiquity[8]. In the *Bāla-paṇḍitasūtra* on the contrary, there is no longer any question of Yama or the divine messengers. The hells are only a halting place in the cycle of rebirths. The text enumerates all the forms of existence, from the life of the damned ones and the animals to that of the chakravartins and gods on their way through the human condition. Thus while the primitive *Nirayasūtra* and the *Devadūtasutta* draw inspiration from Vedic conceptions, the later doctrine of transmigration is found affirmed in the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*.

The consequences of this evolution are reflected even in the smaller details. The *Devadūttasutta* distinguishes a certain number of hells including the *Gūthaniraya* or the 'hell of excrements'. The damned ones are tortured here by worms and it goes without saying that they have no other nourishment than the filth into which they are plunged[6]. In the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* the *Gūthaniraya* is no longer mentioned ; but the gluttons that are born as animals of the back-yard such as chickens, porks, etc., are condemned to feed on excrements. Originally all the evil-doers as well as all sorts of torments were to be found together in hell. Later when the guilty had been divided into two groups, certain types of tortures came to be reserved for the animals. The *Gūthaniraya* of the *Devadūtasutta* represents an extension of these ancient notions. As a contrast the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* no longer mentions the 'hell of excrements' and makes the gluttons suffer on earth, the tortures that they were supposed to endure in the *Gūthaniraya.*

To sum up, the comparison of the texts leads us to distinguish an original *Nirayasūtra* of which we possess at present no more than a fragment as well as the more recent sutras preserved in the Canon of the Sthaviras and the Sarvāstivādins, viz. the *Devadūtasutta* and the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra.* Of the last two the *Devadūtasutta* is more archaic and nearer to the Vedic epoch while the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* reflects more developed conceptions.

The chronology and presumed origin of these texts are to a certain extent confirmed by the order of their appearance in the successive recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna.* The A. W. K. and the *Tsa-a-han* give a short summary of the punishments of hell and refer to the *Devadūtasutta* for details. As a contrast the A.W.Ch. and the *Divyāvadāna* cite the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra.* Now the A.W.K. is probably the oldest recension of the *Aśokāvadāna.* This text out of all the ones, reproduces most faithfully the ancient sources. It is probable that the *Aśokasūtra* preserved at Kauśāmbī in the monasteries of the Sthavira sect quoted the Pāli *Devadūtasutta* with regard to the torments of hell and later at Mathurā the references to this sutta had been replaced by those to the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* of the Sarvāstivādin School.

This way of looking at things is corroborated by the following episode of Mahādeva described in the *Dīpavaṃsa.* We are told here that Mahādeva one of the missionaries sent by Aśoka to spread the (Buddhist) doctrine far and wide. won a large number of converts in the land of the Andhras by preaching the *Devadūtasutta* (*Dīpavaṃsa* VIII, 5). This tradition has a basis of reality. One comes to know from the inscriptions of Aśoka that the latter had sent numerous missionaries to foreign lands. The mission of Mahādeva is one of the points where the legend of Aśoka touches the actual history of the king. We shall not go to the extent of supposing that this apostle preached in fact the *Devadūtasutta* itself during the time of the grand monarch. At any rate it appears that since very early times this sacred text was specially in favour among the adherents of the Sthavira sect. The suttas that tradition attributes to the great missionaries of Aśoka's time must have been the choicest among the most important and famous ones of the Pāli Canon. It is significant that one to be extolled in that list is the *Devadūtasutta* and not the *Bālapaṇḍita.*

It follows from what has been just said that the *Devadūtasutta* was highly in favour among the followers of the Sarvastivādin School. It found a place in the *Majjhima Nikāya* by replacing a primitive *Nirayasūtra* in the Canon, but was in its turn eliminated in many of the recensions of the *Aśokavadāna* by the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* of the Sarvāstivādin School. The episode of the Infernal Prison is one of the older stories of the Aśoka-Saga. The *Nirayasūtra* of which Girika had heard the recitation in the Kukkuṭārāma monastery was undoubtedly contemporaneous with the basic stratum of the Deeds of Aśoka and formed part of the Magadhan collection of Scriptures. It appears that each step of the route pursued by the Aśoka-Saga in course of its progress,—Pāṭaliputra, Kauśāmbī and Mathūrā—corresponds to a distinct description of hell contained in a distinct text, viz. the Magadhan *Nirayasūtra* the Pāli *Devadūtasutta* and the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra,*

The fact that the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* is mentioned in the late recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* does not necessarily indicate

that the redaction of that sutra itself is very late. It may be imagined that from the beginning of the Kauśāmbī and Mathurā phases the primitive *Nirayasūtra* had fallen into disuse and had been replaced at Kauśāmbī by the *Devādūtāsutta* and at Mathurā by the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*. Without doubt the second of these texts transmits much more developed conceptions than those expressed in the preceding one. But this may be due more to local influences than to a difference of date. Many circumstances make it clear that the collective representations of hell were modified more promptly at Mathurā than at Kauśāmbī. Reaching the country of the Śūrasenas Buddhism submitted to outside influences which we shall shortly endeavour to specify ; at the same time it came more directly in contact with Brahmanical thought. It is in the region watered by the parallel courses of the upper Ganges and the Yamunā that the doctrine of *karman* and the philosophy of the Upanishads appear to have been elaborated and formulated. These speculations directly influenced the Buddhists of Mathurā and only indirectly disturbed the communities of Magadha and Kauśāmbī by their repercussions. Among the Sarvāstivādins of Mathurā the primitive *Nirayasūtra* was possibly replaced early by a *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* impregnated with the recent notions regarding transmigration while the Sthaviras of Kauśāmbī were always attached to archaic concepts that found expression in the *Devadūtasutta*.

The neighbourhood of those two sects facilitated the exchange of ideas. It has already been seen how the *Aśokasūtra* had been borrowed by the School of Mathurā from that of Kauśāmbī. There is hardly any doubt that the sacred texts had passed similarly from one canon to another. Without presupposing this reciprocal penetration it is not possible to explain how the rival sects came to consist of numerous common elements a great deal of which cannot be traced back to the earliest epoch. It is probable that the compilers of the Pāli *Majjhima Nikāya* borrowed the *Bālapaṇḍtasūtra* from the *Sarvāstivādins* and the redactors of the Sanskrit *Madhyamāgama* imitated the *Devadūtasutta* of the Sthaviras.

It is indeed difficult to find definite proof of these

exchanges. The original drafts of the Pali *Majjhima Nikāya* that in our opinion contained only a single description of hell, have disappeared, being replaced by a more complete collection. Nevertheless we are furnished with the first glimpses of proof by another collection of sacred texts that forms part of the Canon of the Sthaviras and contains only one description of hell conforming to the text of the *Devadūtasutta*. We are referring to the "Triads" (*Tika Nipata*) of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. This collection contains a *Devadūtasutta* which, minus a few paragraphs, reproduces word for word the *Devadūtasutta* of the Pali *Majjhima Nikāya* (cf. *Aṅguttara Nikāya* I p. 141). As a contrast the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* is absent in it. The omission of this text is significant. It divides itself into two parts of which one commences by the enunciation of the three vices of the ignorant ones and the other by the enumeration of the three qualities of the sage. If it had existed in the Scriptures of the Sthaviras from the very first, it would undoubtedly have been inserted in the 'Triads' of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Now, we find in these triads a clear enumeration of the three characteristics of the ignorant as well as of the sage, but not however the description of hell or the other future habitations of creatures, that forms the basis of the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* (cf. *Aṅguttara* I p. 102). The Triads of the *Aṅguttara* thus appear to point to an epoch during which the Sthaviras considered as canonical the description of the kingdom of Yama described in the *Devadūtasutta*, excluding everything else.

One may express with the help of the following diagram the order of the succession of the texts :

The Magdhan School	...Nirayasūtra (?)	
The School of Kauśāmbī	...Devadūtasutta Majjh. No. 130	Bālapaṇḍitasūtta Majjh. No. 129
The School of Mathurā	...Bālapaṇḍitasūtra Chong-a-han No. 64	Devadūtasutra Chong-a-han No. 199

The evolution continued during the Kashmirian period. The *Kuṇālasūtra* which is dated in that epoch, concludes with a description of the different hells and the other future dwelling

places of creatures. It shall be shown later in what respect this description differs from the preceding ones.

From now on, we can thus distinguish three different strata of traditions regarding hell. During the Magadhan period the punishments for gluttony were described in an extremely archaic sūtra only a fragment of which is preserved for us in the A.W.Ch. In the following epoch new texts were composed viz the Pāli *Devadūtasutta* in which primitive beliefs find expression and which appears to have been written by the Sthaviras of Kauśāmbī; and the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* in which the Sarvāstivādins of Mathurā expounded the remarkable aspects of the theory of transmigration. Later the rival sects borrowed those two texts from each other. Finally, during the Kashmirian period new descriptions of hell replaced the preceding ones.

This process of evolution is parallel to that of the Aśoka-legend. The old story of the Infernal Prison mentioned the primitive *Nirayasūtra.* The *Aśokasūtra* composed at Kauśāmbī, cited probably the *Devadūtasutta.* At Mathurā the Sarvāstivādins substituted for the latter the name of the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra.* Finally during the Kashmirian period a more recent description of hell was added to the *Kuṇālasūtra* Thus arranged in successive stages along the route from Magadha to Kashmir these texts constitute useful landmarks. It would suffice to group round these, some complementary data so that we may catch a glimpse of the history of the Buddhist conception of hell in its outline.

In pursuance of a constant tradition, the prison instituted by Aśoka had to be a 'hell'. According to the *Aśokāvadāna*, it was while listening to a monk reciting a sūtra, that Girika had the idea of the tortures that he would henceforth be ready to inflict on criminals. Such statements are not however surprising. The human institutions and those supposed to have belonged to the world beyond, present in all societies, a certain parallelism. Human beings assign to their gods the palaces and attributes of kings. Life in another world is not considered fundamentally different from that which one leads on earth, and the punishment of the damned ones in the purgatory are quite

analogous to those of the criminals down here. The episode of the Prison built by Aśoka illustrates this truth. It proves that at the time when the Aśoka-legend developed one imagined hell as resembling a prison. Having to explain the creation of a torture-chamber that they regarded as equal to a hell, the story-tellers gave expression to this resemblance by saying that Aśoka's prison had been built on the model of the gaols of the world beyond.

The analogy may be pursued even down to details. According to the early *Nirayasūtra* a fragment of which is preserved for us by the A. W. Ch., the damned were crushed in a pestle or boiled in a cauldron. These are precisely the two tortures said to have been inflicted by Girika : he pounded the bodies of two lovers surprised in the royal palace and afterwards threw the bhikshu Samudra into a cauldron under which he lit a fire. The "Agreeable Prison" of the *Aśokāvadāna* is therefore an exact image of 'hell' as the Buddhists of the Magadhan period pictured to themselves.

The excessive severity of the punishments testified to by the early *Nirayasūtra* has already been observed : the gluttons take advantage of what is pounded in the pestle as well as of what is boiled in the cooking-pot ; accordingly in the next world they shall be pounded and cooked. This hard sentence is an application of the law of retaliation that is found among the Indians as among many other nations during the infancy of the penal code.

In the Aśoka-Saga, the 'hell' under the authority of Girika is found to consist of a single enclosure where condemned sinners undergo pell-mell various kinds of torture. In the *Devadūtasutta* however hell is parcelled into several subdivisions. The 'great hell' or *Mahāniraya* in the centre is a closed place into which one enters through four openings. These gates laid out conforming to the four cardinal points give access to four secondary hells viz. the *Gūthaniraya*, the *Kukkuṭaniraya*, the *Simbalivana* and the *Asipattavana*. Limit is set to this domain by a river, the *Kharodaka* which is the equivalent of the classical *Vaitaraṇī*[7].

With the advent of the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*, a new feature appears in the description of the hells. The account of each

torture begins with these words : "There are beings who are reborn in the different hells. The guardians of these hells having seized them and flung them at full length on ground made of red hot iron, and making only a single flame ..." (Burnouf *Introduction* p. 366). The torments described are multifarious as in the *Devadūtasutta*. But the presence of fire wheresoever tortures are applied, brings some sort of unity in the picture of the infernal world.

This characteristic feature is again accentuated in a greater degree in another work entitled the "Sūtra of the Four Hells" of which even the Chinese translation itself has partially disappeared. We possess merely a fragment of it transcribed in the *King-liu-i-siang* (Nanijo no. 1473), which is a precious anthology compiled in China in 516 (cf. *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XXXVI, 3, p. 53b). This sūtra distinguishes four great hells, more exactly four furnaces, each hotter than the preceding one ; the flames have a length of twenty cubits in the first, thirty in the second, forty in the third and finally sixty in the fourth. These furnaces in which the heat thus becomes increasingly scorching make it possible to maintain the proportion between the chastisement and the gravity of the crimes. These had been created for punishing four bhikshus guilty of diverse offences. Anxiety for maintaining justice in the award of punishments to the criminals is reflected equally in the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* where the sinners are divided into two groups viz. those who go to hell, and those who are reborn as animals ; as a contrast we do not come across any such arrangement in the *Devadūtasutta* in which the multiplicity of hells is regarded only as a means of making the damned suffer more and more as they are conducted from the great *niraya* successively to the others.

Thus the "Sūtra of the Four Hells" allies itself with the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* and is opposed to the Pāli *Devadūtasutta* by virtue of a juster notion regarding the retribution for acts as well as by the important role it assigns to hell-fire. The latter concept ultimately contaminates a text in which it was originally absent. In the *Devadūtasutta* the prose-text contains only an account of the ancient tortures, but four isolated and possibly late verses make allusion to hell-fire. The great *niraya*,

is represented there as a closed precinct the floor of which consists of red-hot iron : *tassa ayomayā bhūmi jalitā tejasā yutā ......*(*Majjhima* III p. 183). These expressions repeated many a time in the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*, appear only once in the *Devadūtasutta* and that again in the group of four verses, which can be struck off without causing any possible harm to the context ; the strophe may therefore be regarded as a superfluous ornament.

Already in the *Devadūtasutta* and also in the primitive *Nirayasūtra*, the infernal fire had served as a means of suffering for the damned. Girika had also lit it under his boilers ; but it was at that time only one means of torture among several others. In the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* and the "Sūtra of the Four Hells" the fire becomes the principal and permanent agent of the sufferings of the condemned ones ; it is the necessary and ever present element that gives to the hells their true character and their unity. Ultimately this notion came to prevail throughout Buddhist literature. It finds expression in the following passage of the *Aśokāvadāna* : "In hell, (there is) the torture of burning for the body delivered into fire ; among animals (there are) the terrors inspired in them by the apprehension of being devoured by one another ; among the *pretas* (there are) the torments of hunger and thirst ; among men (there is) the inquietitude of a life of worldly projects and efforts ; among the gods (there is) the fear of decline and of loosing their happiness ; here are the five causes of the miseries by which the three worlds are enchained" (Burnouf—*Introduction* p. 418). We have already observed that the episode of Vītāśoka carries traces of a process of subsequent rehandling[8]. The above passage which is an extract from it, reflects conceptions much more advanced than those that are expressed in the old episode of the Infernal Prison.

The *Saṃkichcha Jātaka* (*Jātaka* 530, ed, Fausboll V, pp. 261 ff.) contains a more complex description of the hells than the preceding ones. The *nirayas* there are eight in number viz *Sañjīva*, *Kālasutta*, *Saṃghāta*, the two *Roruvas*, *Mahāvīchi*, *Tapana* and *Patāpana* (verse 15).[9] If the first six have nothing analogous to those which we have already discussed, the last two are significant. The *Tapananiraya* is a burning

hell and the *Pratāpana* a more burning one. It may be seen at least with regard to everything concerning the last two stages, that fire is an essential element of the torments meant for the damned, and the successive furnaces are increasingly scorching as in the "Sūtra of the Four Hells". Besides the eight hells of the *Saṃkichchajātaka* are always mentioned as the eight burning hells in later texts. It is probable that fire gradually augmented the intensity from top to bottom in the series. Nevertheless as it was impossible to give expression by nuances of language to this gradation, various names were adopted for the first six stages and those of *Tapana* and *Pratāpana* were reserved for the last two. The *Saṃkichchajātaka* has thus its links with the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* and the 'Sūtra of the Four Hells'. At the same time it is also closely connected with the Pāli *Devadūtasutta.* Several passages of this sutta is literally reproduced there, specially the two stanzas which appear to us to be later as well as the description of the *simbali* forest (verses 18-19 and 52).

During the Kashmirian period the respresentations of the world of the damned ones reached a great height of complexity. The hells are now grouped in two great series viz. the burning hells and the frozen hells. The first category consists also of eight divisions as in the *Saṃkichchajātaka*; but the number of the frozen hells is variable, eight in the V. M. S. and the *Avadānaśataka*[10], and ten in many other texts. Moreover there exists a great number of minor hells corresponding to the secondary *nirayas* of the *Devadūtasutta.*

The 30th sūtra of the *Dīrghāgama* translated into Chinese, is classed among the texts of the period. It places the infernos in the extremeties of the world. The universe according to it is bounded by a circular chain of mountains called the *Chakrabāla-parvata* beyond which there is a second similar chain. Between these two hill-ranges extends an obscure region where star-light does not reach. It is here that one comes across the entrances to the different hells. There are eight great fiery hells, each having four gates and these are surrounded by sixteen minor hells. Further ten icy hells are also enumerated (cf. *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XII. 9. pp. 98b ff.). The same description is reproduced in greater or lesser

details in other works corresponding to the thirtieth sūtra of the Chinese translation of the *Dīrghāgama*[11] in the collection. Besides the names of the ten frozen hells are found in a sutta of the Pāli *Saṃyuttanikāya* of which Feer has given a translation (cf. *L'enfer indien* in the *J. A.* 1892 II p. 213), and also in a sutta of the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (*Aṅguttara* V p. 173).

The *Kuṇālasūtra* transmits similar notions. It informs us that in course of a journey through his empire Aśoka once crossed the range of the *Chakravāla* mountain. At that time he heard a subterranean noise like thunder which made heaven and earth tremble. Looking down he found King Yama surrounded by his ministers, judging sinners and sending them to suffer torments in the eighteen hells (cf. *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XXIV, 10, p. 69a). This total number undoubtedly includes the eight 'hot' and the ten 'cold' hells. However when at the end of the sutra the Venerable Sumanas describes the different parts of the universe, he is found to enumerate first the eight burning hells ; then he gives a list of fourteen others in which one recognises inspite of some obscure expressions, the ten 'cold' hells and four supplementary divisions corresponding apparently to the four secondary *nirayas* of the *Devadūtasutta* (*ibid.* XXIV. 10. p. 71a).

Thus, the more one moves further from the sources, the more complicated the system becomes. The law of this progression however is very simple : the later texts take over the basic facts from the ancient descriptions and multiply them usually by two or four (On the method of the formation of mythological numbers see Bergaigne *La religion vedique* II p. 115). According to the same plan the *Devadūtasutta* presents a principal *niraya* flanked by four secondary ones. The "Sutra of the Four Hells" distinguishes four categories of hell probably superposed and increasingly scorching. The *Saṃktchchajātaka* doubles the number of the major categories and also keeps in mind the secondary ones. The Chinese translation of the *Dīrghagama* preserves the account of eight burning hells, but it attaches to each of them sixteen minor hells, in other words, four times more than in the *Devadūtasutta*. Finally, the number of the burning hells grows double of that of the frozen hells.

Besides, since a very early period the same descriptions are found common to the different schools. It appears that before the redaction of the *Saṃkichchajātaka* the respective traditions of the Sthaviras and the Sarvāstivādins had already been intermingled. In order to distinguish the tendencies peculiar to each of these sects, it is necessary to go back to the commencement of the Kauśāmbī-Mathurā period.

During the Magadhan phase hell is conceived as a prison. Afterwards there appears a different notion which finds expression in the "Sūtra of the Four Hells". The hell according to the latter is 'fiery'. The two notions are clearly distinct from each other, the 'prison' being the opposite of the 'furnace'. After however the concepts had been associated with each other, these afforded the writers with various opportunities for the exercise of their imagination. But it is always possible to discover by critical analysis the same fundamental elements behind diverse literary appearances.

In the very archaic *Devadūtasutta* written in Pāli, the prose-text is found to contain only the exposition of tortures the description of which is a legacy of a very primitive epoch. Only one stanza, probably late, seems to draw inspiration from new conceptions. In the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* torment by fire is the characteristic of each of the punishments. From that time the conception of the hell-furnace tends to come to the surface ; but this notion, more abstract and less picturesque than the earlier ones, did not succeed in eliminating the latter completely. The desire to terrorise sinners led undoubtedly to the perpetuation of the memory of primitive tortures.

In the early texts where it makes its appearance, hell-fire is represented as situated below the ground. It is accordingly to be regarded as subterranean fire. This enables us to point to a fresh contrast between the primitive torture-chamber and the later furnace. The field of the primitive tortures was essentially an even surface where the damned ones used to undergo side by side the most diverse types of torture. In admitting the existence of the underground fire we superpose the two images viz. the primitive tortures on the surface of the earth and the scorching fire below. And so that the fire could cause the most cruel suffering it was imagined

that the floor of the prison was of iron as well as that the enclosure within which sinners had to suffer, was covered by an iron-roof. Soon even this appeared insufficient. It was no doubt thought that as one would descend deeper below the surface of the earth, one would continue endlessly to come across zones increasingly torrid where residence would be much more painful. To the primitive hell extended on the surface of the earth came now to be added several strata sunk into the depth below, first four, afterwards eight. And as the heat gradually descended downwards, the lower layers became hotter and more afflicting[12].

To sum up: towards the beginning of the Kauśambī-Mathurā period, the notion of a sub-terranean furnace came to be added to the primitive concept of a place of torture situated on the surface of the earth. These dissimilar elements gradually blended into more and more skilful combinations. Afterwards, during the Kashmirian period a third notion, that of the icy hells, led to the creation of a new series of infernal sub-divisions which being added to the burning hells, once more increased the already raised number of the divisions of the infernal world.

As it will be noticed, the most developed concept of the Buddhist hell is not the result of a series of logical transformations systematically linked with one another. It cannot be said that during a particular period in its history, the concept of hell is derived from what it had been earlier. At certain moments during its evolution new tendencies come into play and modify its course; such are the notion of the underground fire and that of the 'frozen' hells. Having pointed out the disturbing effect of these concepts I am also under obligation to state my notions regarding their possible origin. However, as it is a delicate and extremely complex problem touching the entire body of Indian cosmology, I pray that these indications may kindly be considered a prelude to a more developed and more exhaustive study which I propose to devote to the subject in a subsequent volume.

During the earliest Vedic period the empire of Yama is represented to be "a subterranean region of phantoms, open unquestionably to all individuals without distinction of good

and evil, a region of the ancestors (*pitṛiloka*) as opposed to that of the gods (*devaloka*), the entrance to which stands on the south-west while the divine region lies in the north-east." (Oldenberg *Religion du Veda* trans. Henry p. 467). There is complete contrast between these two zones. They are situated in diametrically opposite directions in relation to the world of the living; and while the manes live down below in darkness, the gods reside high above in light

During a later epoch the luminous region becomes accessible to souls of the dead who are found there in the company of the gods. The latter receive at their table those persons who have performed a large number of sacrifices during their lives. The sinners are never found to enjoy these divine favours. They live in a dark dungeon into which divine wrath has flung them. As a sequel to this transformation of the abode of the dead Yama is no longer found to reign there alone, Varuṇa the god of the region of light is henceforth associated with him. The Vedas thus show us the spectacle of the soul in the midst of ethereal light, contemplating the two gods, Yama and Varuṇa (Oldenberg *Ibid* p. 467). At this stage the *devaloka* and the *pitṛiloka* are confounded; the gods and the meritorious among human beings are mixed together; the sinners live apart, but their dungeon appears merely to be an appendage to the palace of the gods.

In order to preserve some proportion between the recompenses beyond the grave and the merits of each individual, some poets distinguish several levels in the supra-terrestrial world; they admit the existence of three strata arranged one over another; the more a soul is virtuous, the higher it is placed, the most meritorious ones being enthroned in the sun. The residence of the evil-doers are always down below. Thus arises a division of the beyond into four distinct stages conforming to a new ideal of justice. But it is difficult to decide if these speculations had ever any influence with the great mass of the population. These are certainly not in harmony with the general body of Vedic poems where usually more vulgar aspirations are expressed. It appears certain that inspite of the efforts of some idealists, the dead were continued to be represented as

drinking and living merrily with the gods, thanks to the generosities of the living.

The oldest texts of Iran are the Gāthās of the Avestā, which are remarkably archaic fragments but which represent merely a sectarian development, viz. the Avestic or the Zoroastrian doctrine, and not the religious thought of the whole of Iran Before Zoroaster and also for a long time after him, the abode of the dead was regarded among certain Iranian sects as having been inhabited usually by the wicked and as distinct from that of the gods. During the period which could be called Indo-Iranian, the conduct of individuals on earth does not appear to have been regarded as influencing appreciably their destiny in the next world. The gods simply waited for an opportunity to inflict an exemplary punishment on those who had directly offended them It was however no longer the same after the great religious reform traditionally attributed to Zoroaster, which seems to have inspired the Gāthās of the Avesta. Morality now came to be associated with religion. Henceforth the dwelling place of the evil-doers in the next world is clearly differentiated : it is the residence of the *druj*, the habitation of the demon as opposed to heaven, the home of Ahura, the benevolent god. As to Yima, the equivalent of the Vedic Yama, he dwells neither in heaven nor in hell ; he is in a distinct *vara* according to eschatological notions.

In primitive Buddhism, notions regarding the world of the dead are derived from Vedic concepts. We shall have occasion later to show that the legend of Samudra and Girika rests actually on old myths. For the present it would suffice to point to a few analogies. The Ṛig Vedic hell is a dungeon into which malefactors are hurled (*Ṛig Veda* VII. 104. 3) ; the hell of Aśoka's day is similarly a prison. In Vedic mythology the dead were provided with boats because they had to cross a river in order to enter the kingdom of Yama (*Atharva Veda* XVIII. 4, 7). Likewise in the *Devadūtasutta* the infernal world is represented as being bounded by the river *Khārodakā*.

The *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* however reflects quite different conceptions. The dead no longer pass necessarily into the realm Yama ; they are reborn in the different spheres of the universe

in forms determined by their previous *karma.* The influence of the doctrines of the Upanishads can be clearly recognised here. Besides the hell in which criminals are reborn is described as an intensely hot region the floor of which is of iron turned red-hot due to the sub-terranean fire. Nothing is to be found either in the domain of Vedic religion or in the subsequent philosophical speculations that would exactly recall this latter conception.

The Iranian beliefs have deviated from their general line in the same sense as those of the Buddhists. The Avestic inferno is a gloomy and foul place ; the damned receive only unclean food there as in the *Gūṭhaniraya* of the Buddhists (*Yasna* XXXI, 20 ; IL. 11 , LIII, 6 ; cf. *supra* p. 132). There is a similar description of hell in a text of the *Bundahis* : "The interior of the mysterious hell is cold, arid, gloomy and stony ; its darkness is thick enough to be gripped by hand and its stench can be cut with a knife" (*Bundahis* XXVIII, 47). But the same text knows another blazing hell by the side of the cold one : "There is a region as cold as the coldest ice and frost. There is also a region as hot as the heat of the hottest and the most scorching fire.'' (*Bundahis* XXVIII, 48 ; cf. Soderblom *La vie future d'apres le Mazdeisme* p. 105). It is thus clear that in Iran as in India, the concept of fire had come ultimately to be associated with the ancient descriptions of hell. The Avestic 'hell' originally specified as cold, had its number doubled by the addition of the account of a flaming inferno. The Buddhist hell in which there is originally no sign of an abnormal temperature is also found to be completely transformed in the end ; in the 'Sutra of the Four Hells' as well as in the *Bālapaṇḍitsūtra* it has become a place of sojourn where the existence of fire makes itself felt on all sides.

In which country did the innovation come to be introduced for the first time ? The history of Mazdaism remains as yet more obscure than that of Buddhism. It is therefore by no means possible to solve the problem by chronological calculations. The question however can be approached from another angle. I have shown elsewhere that the respective *Parinirvāṇa-sūtras* of the Mula-Sarāvastivādins and the Sthaviras reproduce

a prediction of the Buddha on the causes of earthquakes (cf. *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddda* I in the *J. A.* 1918, pp. 66-77). According to these very old texts the world is composed of three elements laid one upon another ; the base consists of space ; on space rests water which again supports the earth above. The concept of the subterranean water seems to point to the Vedic past. Indra not only releases the rain-water from the clouds, but with his thunderbolt he also liberates and brings out the sources of water imprisoned underground (Oldenberg *Religion du Veda* p. 118). In the Buddhist texts the very same conception is generalised ; below the surface of the earth is stretched a continuous sheet of water.

It is not that fire does not play any part in the above cosmology, but it certainly does not yet constitute a distinct stage in the general structure of the world. It is diffused in the waters, plants and in the clouds flashing lightning. In the Vedic hymns, fire is conceived in different forms : the sacrificial fire is identical with that which blazes in the storm or again with that which appears each morning in the form of sunlight. Descending from the sky with rain, fire finds its way into the plants along with it ; finally it is regarded as the principle of life in human and animal bodies (Bergaigne *La Religion Vedique*, Introduction pp. x-xi). These five aspects of the universal fire are common to the Ṛig Veda and the Avesta. Probably these concepts have an earlier Indo-Iranian basis. As long as these notions prevailed there was really no necessity to conceive a blazing subterranean sphere.

But if the idea of an underground fire agrees ill with early Indo-Iranian beliefs or with the cosmological theories of primitive Buddhism, it is connected with certain physical aspects of Iran. The Avestic inferno is localised in the north (Soderblom *Ibid.* p. 105). On that side the boundary of Iran is constituted by the Elburz. This mountain range dominated by the very large volcano Demavend, holds an important place in Iranian mythology ; on top there is the bridge Cinvat which the dead must cross ; down below opens the gate of hell[13]. The volcano, that is to say, the subterranean fire, must therefore have been almost inevitably associated with hell[14]. In fact in the genuine legends of Iran the mythical King Biurasp who is said to have

laid waste the earth by his tyranny during a period of thousand years, is found to suffer punishment on the volcano Demavend where he is tied with iron chains just as the condemned ones are fixed to the scorching floor in the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra*. And the author of the *Bundahis* after having enumerated the five births of fire according to the ancient orthodox notions, adds the comment that the fire *Berezi Savang*, the first of these has been created by Ahura Mazda "as three animated souls in the earth, mountains and other objects". One feels that an effort has been made here to reconcile the Indo-Iranian conception of fire being universally diffused into nature, to the later dogma of fire being specially created in the earth and mountains. The story of the infernal furnace of the Demavend is obviously an illustration of the latter.

Once a connection was established between the respective conceptions of hell and subterranean fire in Persia, the transfer of the theory to India followed easily. Without referring to earlier times one can comprehend how the Mauryas had drawn inspiration from the polity and art of the Achaemenids. During the epoch of Menander occidental influences must have been preponderant at least up to Mathurā.

This is certainly no place for a detailed study as to how the notion of the subterranean fire, when transported to India, came to modify the primitive cosmology. It would be sufficient to indicate that in the *Mahābhārata* as well as in a late sūtra of the *Ekottarāgama* the elements constituting the structure of the world are found to be four in number. To the the three stages enumerated in the earlier texts, space, water and earth, a new one has been added, viz. the fire (*Le Parinirvāṇa et les Furnérailles du Buddha* I in the *J. A* 1918, p. 70 note 1).

The localisation of the Buddhist hell in the Chakravāla mountains is possibly another sign indicating Iranian influences. According to the earliest Vedic conception, the world is a plain with uncertain boundaries limited on the north-east by the region of the gods and on the south-west by the abode of the dead. These descriptions imply a continental habitat. Later when the Aryan tribes after coming round the Himālayas began to explore their new domain, they confronted the oceans into which the Indus and the Ganges flow. The world now appeared

to them as formed of continents washed by the sea and laid out symmetrically around a massive central mountain. Varuṇa, the god of the luminous space saw his domains increase and became the lord of the unlimited ocean.[15] These new ideas came to agree without difficulty with the notion of the subterranean waters. The earth is supposed according to this latter view, to have rested on the waters which overflow it on all sides. This unstable situation comparable to that of a raft explains the occurrence of earthquakes. According to the sūtras cited earlier (*supra* p. 146) it is enough that an ascetic should picture the world to himself as a small surface amidst a vast expanse of water in order to be impressed readily with its powerful vibrations.

The Mazdian theory is quite different. Having colonised plateaus with steep brinks the Iranians conceived the world as a circular plain surrounded by a chain of mountains,—the Hara Berezaiti (*Bundahis* xii, 3 ; cf. Soderblom *Ibid*. p. 97). The Elburz is the most prominent peak of this chain and hell is situated in its depths. When the universe shall come to an end molten metal liquified by the subterranean fire shall be poured on the surface of the earth. Then the mountains shall be levelled and the abode of the *druj* shall be destroyed. This eschatological myth sums up the principal ideas of Zoroastrianism regarding the constitution of the universe : the depths of the mountains are at the same time the dwelling place of the infernal fire and the residence of the demon. The mutually associated notions of mountains, hell and demon characterise Mazdian cosmology.

Thus for the Aryans of India the earth is surrounded by water ; for those of Iran it is encircled by mountains. The two cosmologies are opposed to each other. The progress of geographical knowledge was to confirm the Indians in their belief. Set against the Himālayas as it is, is not Jambudvīpa surrounded by the sea ? Do not all the big rivers,—the Ganges the Indus, the Oxus, the Tarim,—appear to emit from a central mass of mountains and flow towards the encircling ocean ? And yet in the texts of the Kashmirian period we come across unambiguous allusions to the old cosmology of Iran. Aśoka makes a journey to the extremities of the world

and arrives at the foot of high mountains. It is the boundary line formed by the *Chakravāla*. Down below opens the gate of hell. A loud thunder-like noise comes from below the earth. This ornamental presentation of facts could not have been imagined in India ; it is purely Mazdaic in origin.[16]

The fact that during the Kashmirian epoch the Buddhists recognised the existence of burning as well as frozen hells, also deserves attention. The same contrast finds expression in Pehlavi literature (*Bundahis* XXVIII, 47). For the inhabitants of a plateau exposed to extreme temperatures, frost and excessive heat are the two causes of suffering. When they describe the golden age,—the happy reign of King Yima, the Iranians are pleased to imagine an epoch where "it was neither hot nor cold". (*Yasna* XX). It is not surprising that in their hells the sinners are found to suffer both from cold and heat. What however appears extraordinary, is the diffusion of these notions in the valley of the Ganges and even down to Ceylon, among the Sthaviras as well as the Sarvāstivādins. The belief in frozen hells is possibly one of the facts that best demonstrate to what extent concepts imported into India through the north west have penetrated the Buddhist world.

These occidental influences appear capable to me of explaining certain pecularities of the texts relating to hell. It has already been observed that the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* is divided into two sections one of which begins by enunciating the three vices of the unwise (*bāla*) and the other by enumerating the three qualities of the wise (*paṇḍita*). The Buddha said : "What are the *dharmas* of those without sense ? Threefold are the characteristics of the unwise, the marks of the unwise, the signs of the unwise, that make people one calls unwise, really unwise. What are the three ? The unwise person thinks evil thoughts, speaks evil words, does evil deeds .." (*Chong-a-han* XII, 7, p. 61a ; cf. *Majjhima Nikāya* III, p. 163). Further : 'Bhagavat said : "What are the *dharmas* of the wise ? Threefold are the characteristics of the wise, the marks of the wise, the signs of the wise that make people one calls wise, really wise. What are the three ? The wise man thinks noble thoughts, speaks noble words and does noble deeds." (*Chong-a-han* XII, 7, p. 62b ; cf. *Majjhima Nikāya* III p. 170). The two parallel passages

evidently correspond to each other. In the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* these are separated by long developments but if one would compare them, they would be found to form one of those short *sūtras* characterised by one or more enumerations of *dharma* such as one comes across in large number in the *Āgama*. This reconstitution is by no means an arbitrary one. Both the Pāli *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarāgama* contain in the series of Triads a short *sūtra* which enumerates the three characteristics respectively of the wise and the unwise without any embellishment (*Aṅguttara* I p, 102; *Tseng-i-a-han* XII, 1, p. 48b). The importance of these texts becomes apparent at the first glance. They furnish us with a scale of moral values and class good and evil works into three categories. Such a classification might have been the result of a great deal of casuistry. It represented in broad outline the speculations of theoreticians who were always desirous of reducing the diversity of phenomena to numerical series. In fact Buddhist authors have frequently utilised them in their works.

The triad formed of thought, speech and act, is not unknown to other sects. However one does not come across it in the Vedic *Saṃhitās* and it appears only rarely in the *Brāhmaṇas* (cf. Weber *Indische Streifen* I p. 209). This does not take us by surprise. In Vedic religion dominated by the theory of sacrifice, intentions do not matter. It is above all the acts that produce merit or demerit. The sacrifice which is the act par excellence possesses here a weight quite out of proportion to that of speech or thought.

In the earliest texts the triad is presented in the form, *manas, vāk,* and *karman*—'mind, speech and act'. The usual sequence to be met with in the Buddhist texts viz. *kāya, vāk, manas* (body, speech, mind)[17], is opposed to this formula. We may well imagine what led to the development from the first stage to the second. To the Buddhists intention is an important element of morality; an evil thought is also regarded as a karman. They do not therefore differentiate between thought and action as the Brahmanical authors do. *Karman* has thus become with them a general term with three different senses viz. the acts of the body (*kāya*), speech (*vāk*) and mind (*manas*). The Jainas also adopt the same triad as the

Buddhists i. e. *kāya, vāk* and *manas*[18], and Manu (XII, 4, 7) distinguishes in the same manner the acts of the mind, speech and body.

It would be easy to see that in the above context the *Devadūtasutta* conforms to the Buddhist tradition while the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* deviates from it. In the first of these texts as Yama calls upon the condemned sinners he is found to tell them each time...*na kalyāṇam akāsi kāyena vāchāya manasā* "thou hast never done anything good through your body speech and mind" (*Majjhima* III pp. 180 ff.) On the contrary in the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* the characteristics of the sage and the fool are arranged in the order of thought, speech and act. This difference confirms the view we have maintained earlier viz. the *Devadūtasutta* is a text closer to primitive Buddhism than the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* which is saturated with alien ideas. To what influences shall we attribute the disaccord that we have come to observe ? It appears improbable that Brāhmaṇical theories could have been its cause. The doctrine of transmigration common to the Upanishads and the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra,* rests on the notion of *karman* conceived in the widest possible sense But then why do we find a formula fallen into disuse after the *Brāhmaṇas,* reappearing in a text as developed as the *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* ? This anomaly can be easily explained if we take into account the working of occidental influences.

The triad,—thought, speech and act, recurs persistently and emphatically in the religious literature of Mazdaism. *Humata* "good thought", *hūxta* "good speech" and *hvarsta* "good action" form together the *asa* or the moral order in the universe (Soderblom *Ibid* p 108). In a large number of passages of the Avesta and even in the Gāthic texts (*Yasna* XXXVI, 5) these notions are in the same way enumerated as three opposites. These now find place in doctrinal definitions. Thus the *asemaoua* is he who "cultivates religion in thought and speech", "but does not realise it in his acts" (*Yasna* IX, 31). The following formula must be recited by the followers of Mazdaism every morning and evening : "All good thoughts, all good words, all good acts lead to heaven. All evil thoughts, all evil words, all evil acts lead to hell"...(*Annales du Musée Guimet* Tome XXIV, *Fragments* Westergaard 3, 2). This is substantially the same as the short

sutra of the *Aṅguttara* with this difference that good works are here associated with the notion of heaven and the evil ones with that of hell pretty nearly in the same manner as in the *Bala-paṇḍitasūtra*. The relation between the classification of actions and the division of the infernal world is much emphasised in a passage of the Avesta reproduced in Chapter XVII of the *Book of Arda Vīraf*. After death the soul of the evil-doer goes first to the domain of evil thought, next to that of evil speech, afterwards to that of evil deed and finally to the realm of eternal darkness (*Yast* XXII and Barthélemy *Le Livre d'Arda-Vīraf* p. 39 and *Introduction* p. XXIII). The lower region which is the most terrible. is the abode of Aṅgra Mainyu (cf. *Hātoxt-Nask Fragment II*). From an ancient epoch down to a sufficiently late period the Mazdian hell has therefore been represented as partitioned into four zones the last of which was the most terrifying as in the Buddhist *Sūtra of the Four Hells*. In a parallel manner though in an opposite sense the soul journeying to heaven, passes first to the region of good thought, then to of that good speech, afterwards to that of good deed and finally reaches the realm of eternal light, the residence of Ahura Mazda (*Hātoxt-Nask, Fragment*, II, 15 and 16).

The triad,—thought, speech and action, has therefore constituted the framework of the Mazdian speculations concerning heaven and hell. It is by no means an accident that we rediscover it in the *Balapaṇḍitasūtra* which forecasts the destinies of the good and evil ones. The Buddhist *Sūtra of the Four Hells* appears to bear witness to the fact that the division of the infernal region into four quarters has passed from Iran to India. The concept of the above triad involved in this system possibly followed the same route.

In short, the *Balapaiṇḍtasūtra* is linked up with the Upanishads through the doctrine of transmigration. It owes to Mazdaism the notion of the subterranean fire and it repeats several times the triad,—thought, speech and action,—which in this form and during this epoch might equally have come from Iran. As a set-off the *Devadūtasutta* does not forecast for the evil-doers any other habitat than the kingdom of Yama. The description of hell that it contains is extremely

archaic, and it further remains true to the Buddhist formula,--body, speech and mind.

The contents of these two texts appear to be determined at least in part by the presumed places of their origin. While the Pāli *Devadūtasutta* seems to have been composed at Kauśāmbī, the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* was probably a production of the School of Mathurā. Situated more to the east, the former city was best placed for affording shelter from foreign influences to the traditions bequeathed by the Magadhan church. Placed in a much more advanced position on the road to the north-west, the city of the Śūrasenas was at the point through which the basic Mazdaic elements had infiltrated into the Buddhist world before the great movement of penetration characterising the Kashmirian period.

According to the *Aśokāvadāna* when the executioner Girika desired to have his torture-chamber built, he asked the king to build him a nice, pleasant-looking dwelling place ; this was the 'Agreeable Prison'. This detail is in contrast to the severe theme of the story. One can explain it, apparently by a reference to the origin of the concept of hell. Previous to the rise of Buddhism. the Indian idea of hell was that of an annexe of the palace of the king of the dead. Like those fortresses that concealed horrible dungeons behind a magnificent exterior the dwelling of Girika,—an image of the palace of Yama, had an agreeable look although people underwent terrible sufferings there. One entered it easily but could no more come out it. This feature refers to the abode of the dead in its entirety and not to hell alone. The legend has its roots in the distant past when the gods and the departed ancestors were supposed to be reunited in the same domain and the sages were thought to have a merry time at the table of the king of the dead, while sinners were being tortured in his prison.

On the other hand the legend of the 'hell' said to have been built by Aśoka, transmits notions essentially different from those of the Vedic epoch. Originally there was a clear distinction between the respective domains of the living and the dead. Yama and Varuṇa who reigned over the manes, were gods[1] ; the earthly kings were mortal men. One could not

certainly imagine a beyond essentially different from the temporal world, but the contrast between the two domains was not for that reason felt less accutely. In the Aśoka-legend on the contrary, the distinction is not as well-marked. Aśoka who is an earthly king is as the same time the sovereign of hell. This is certainly in harmony with the peculiar character of Aśoka's kingship. The episode of the submission of the nāgas has previously enabled us to realise the principle that the authority of the powerful Chakravartin is unlimited. He commands imperiously in the realm of air, below the surface of earth and under water. It would not be enough to say that he wields the powers of a god ; very often the gods themselves have been conceived after the image of earthly rulers. But while all confine their activities merely to a particular region of the universe or preside over the same category of phenomena, Chakravartin Aśoka is never known to have possessed a limited dominion or any specialised activity. He is at first represented to be an earthly ruler, and afterwards as his legend undergoes a progressive development he is found besides to encroach upon the domain reserved for the gods ; properly speaking he now tends to become a king of the gods. This idea must have been of a singular significance in Brahmnical and Buddhist literature. It is possible that it had been suggested to the Buddhists by the almost parallel development of the legend of the Buddha. Śākyamuni made from early times to resemble different earthly kings, tended at the same time to rise superior to the gods, and after having imbibed certain features of the Chakravartin, might have ceded to the latter in return quite a few aspects of his real personality.

Another original element in the episode of the "Agreeable Prison" is the distinctly moral character of the principal personages. According to pre-Buddhistic notions Yama is neither good nor evil. He performs his function which is to punish the evil-doers without cruelty, with the impartiality of a judge. In the episode of the 'Agreeable Prison' Girika is an evil being ; cruelty is the very foundation of his nature ; he takes delight in tormenting the unhappy ones whom chance or royal order happens to throw into his dungeons. The master of hell is no longer a judge ;

he is a demon if one takes the word in the sense of the spirit of evil.

Outside India, it would not be necessary to go very far to look for analogous conceptions. In Iran, hell is believed to be the residence of the *druj* one of the personifications of the spirit of evil. And as if to point very distinctly to the common origin of the two beings the Indian demon is called Girika or "the mountaineer". With the Mazdians, as in later Buddhism, hell is localised in the mountains standing on the borders of the earth. The name 'Girika' given to the guardian of hell, is an index which is likely to show that since the redaction of the *Aśokāvadāna* the two concepts of mountain and hell had become associated with each other in India.

The *Aśokāvadāna* holds up the virtuous Samudra vis-a-vis the wicked Girika, the jailer of hell. With regard to the former too the moral character is clearly indicated. Girika is a demon whereas Samudra is a saint ; and if the pious story-tellers have introduced Samudra into the infernal world, it is to demonstrate the impotence of the demon in the presence of the saint and the final triumph of the latter after a brief struggle.

When one confronts names like Samudra (the ocean) and Girika (the mountain or the mountaineer), one is undcubtedly tempted to look for natural explanations of their rivalry. Many details of the story would not however favour such an interpretation. When Samudra is thrown into a cauldron full of foul substance, it is in vain that the executioners light a great fire below it. He prevents the fire from growing hot ; he purifies the foul cauldron and in the water now grown clear, there springs up in full bloom a lotus flower on whtch he is seated. It is not possible to describe more clearly the purificatory action of water and its victorious struggle against fire which it extinguishes. Afterwards from out of the cauldron where he is seated Samudra shoots himself forth into the sky producing rain and fire in turn. The stanza he pronounces before undergoing torment appears equally significant : *A-Yu-Wang-Chuan* XXIV, 10 p. 3b, Col. 9.

"my night is over ; my sun has risen......"

One may of course maintain that Samudra and Girika represent water as opposed to fire,—daylight gradully dispelling

darkness. Considering however the narrative as a whole, it certainly appears that these antetheses serve only to put into relief the basic theme, of the episode, the struggle of the virtuous ascetic against the cruel demon. The conflict of elements is here only a symbol : it illustrates and conveys the struggle of moral forces. Through this once again the Buddhist legend links itself up with the conceptions of Mazdian dualism which sum up the life of the universe as one incessant state of conflict between the forces of good and evil.

The story of Samudra and Girika therefore is based on very ancient elements. Like the palace in which kings Yama and Varuṇa assemble the manes, the abode of Girika is an attractive dwelling place concealing a torture-chamber. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the myth has become a legend. The warder of hell is at the service Chakravartin Aśoka. Besides the rivalry between the good Samudra and the evil Girika lends interest to the story. Fire and Water, light and darkness, are here only abstract entities that symbolise the basic struggle of good against evil.

One arrives thus at conceptions closely akin to those of Mazdaism Previous to the rise of Buddhism when the manes were supposed to join the gods in the realm of light Yama and Varuṇa reigned together over the dead without anyone imagining any kind of rivalry between them. But in Iran since very early times heaven, the abode of sages, is thought to be directly opposed to hell, the residence of criminals. Ahura the luminous deity, is seated in the fourth heaven which is the highest and most glorious, while Angra Mainyu, the demon of darkness, resides in the fourth hell which is the lowest and most terrifying. In so far as it indicates the rivalry between Samudra and Girika and interprets it in a moral sense, Buddhism approaches Iranian dualism. There is another striking analogy. According to Mazdaic belief, good must triumph over evil ; hell is sure to be destroyed sometime or other. The episode of the 'agreeable prison' has an identical denouement. After the conversion of Aśoka by Samudra Girika is put to death and the 'hell' is destroyed.

It now remains for us to examine a new aspect of the problem of Iranian influence and at the same time to answer a

possible objection. If Samudra and Girika really represent good and evil and since the struggle between these two principles is of genuine importance to the Buddhists, how is it that these personages occupy so small a place in the Scriptures? Their adventure is narrated only in the works dealing with the cycle of Aśokan legends. It is really surprising that the story is not to be found anywhere else.

The Aśoka-Saga in our opinion, came to be written only in the beginning of the Kauśāmbī-period During that epoch the struggle between good and evil had already been emphasized in another much more celebrated legend, through the story of the conflict of characters belonging to the premier rank. The rivalry of the Buddha and Māra (the personification of Evil) has the same significance. It causes a quarrel between the founder of Buddhism and an ancient deity of elevated rank. Neither Samudra whose mythical origins had been pretty nearly forgotten, nor particularly Girika the outcast hangman commanded enough prestige to stand comparison with Śākyamuni and Māra, Composed much later and making useless repetitions by the side of one of the principal episodes of the Buddha-legend, the story of the rivalry of Samudra and Girika could not but be regarded as a fragment of secondary importance.

This is certainly not the place to enquire how the god Māra had been transformed into a demon,—the chief of the evil powers,—nor by what steps he ultimately found himself entangled in the adventures of the Buddha-Chakravartin. It would be useful however to take note of an essential difference between the defeat of Māra and that of Girika. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the struggle between Samudra and his adversary ends with the annihilation of the latter. Aśoka, after his conversion by the bhikshu, destroys the 'agreeable prison'. The victory of good over evil is thus definitely and completely achieved. In the Buddha-legend, Māra is not reduced to impotence. His army is routed before the Bodhi Tree, but that does not lead to his submission. He remains the adversary of the Buddha and partly regains his advantage the day when he persuades the Lord to enter into Nirvāṇa. Being rid of his rival, Māra afterwards proves a redoubtable opponent to the disciples of the great teacher.

During the epoch in which the biography of the Buddha took shape, the struggle against Māra had not yet acquired all the moral significance that came subsequently to be attached to it. The supreme question was to assimilate the personality of the Lord to those of the great kings of the legend. The epic of the Chakravartin admits necessarily of a struggle in course of which the solar hero triumphs over his adversary belonging to the realm of darkness ; but this triumph suggested by ancient nature-myths, is not more definitive than the every-day victory of light over darkness. Later the development of moral ideas attributed to this conflict a certain significance which originally it did not possess or possessed only in the slightest degree. Māra became principally the spirit of evil. It now seemed regrettable that the Buddha did not cripple him for ever. But the legend of Śākyamuni had already attained a fixed shape. One could not dream of modifying its main lines. On the other hand the legend of Aśoka had not yet been written down. Later and more supple, it fell in easily with the new tendencies The episode of Girika and Samudra thus concluded with a positive victory for the latter.

This attempt was afterwards imitated. Girika was merely a supernumerary, a man without any prestige. The pious souls were wishing for a complete annihilation of Māra. The author of the *Aśokāvadāna* undertook to treat this subject and succeeded fully in doing it. In his story, as far as one could see, the honour of having subdued the Evil One went to Upagupta. Surprised in his sleep and subjugated by an irresestible charm, Māra submitted and was converted. Henceforth he did no longer torment the disciples of the Buddha.

This narrative must have been composed in an epoch when the devotees were very much occupied with the problem of Māra. The latter intervenes unceasingly in the legend of Upagupta, first, with a view to prevent the young man from embracing the religious life, and afterwards to try to obstruct to his preaching. Must the prominent place given to the demon in the legend of Upagupta, take into account the Iranian influences at work in the region of Mathurā from early times ? We have no evidence whatever to come to a positive conclusion on this point. The nature-myths con-

tained in the body of the Buddha-legend probably held the germs of the ethical significance underlying the episode of Māra, the spirit of evil opposed to the beneficent Buddha. Nevertheless it appears likely that the development of this notion was facilitated by Mazdaic influences. In this way it is possible to find an explanation for the analogies that introduce the respective concepts of the Buddhist Māra and the Iranian Angra-Mainyu, particularly, at a later period.

APPENDIX

The Torment of Five Shackles in the Buddhist Hell

The fragment of the *Balapaṇḍitasūtra* inserted in the *Divyāvadāna* describes the tortures inflicted on those who are reborn in the various hells. The last paragraph deals with the torment of Five Shackles. Its translation as given by Burnouf, is a bit unintelligible :

"There are creatures, oh, Monks, who are born in the hells. The warders of the hells, after having seized them and laid them on the floor made of red-hot iron, and encircled by a single flame, inflict on them the torture which consists of being enchained in five places. These unhappy ones walk with their hands on two bars of iron ; they walk with two feet on a bar of the same metal ; they walk with an iron-bar across the heart" (Burnouf *Introduction* p. 367).

The proper meaning can probably be restored with the help of corresponding passages of the Pāli *Majjhima Nikāya* and the Chinese translation of the *Madhyamāgama.*

1) *Divyāvadāna* p. 376 : '.... *Yān narakapālā gṛihītvā ayomayyaṃ bhamavādīptayāṃ pradīptāyāṃ saṃprajvalitayaṃ ekajvālībhūtayāmuttānakān pratisṭhāpya pañchaviṣaṭabandharaṃ kāraṇaṃ kārayantyubhayor hastayorāyasau kīlau kramantyubhayoḥ pādayorāyase kīle kramanti madhye hṛidayasyāyasaṃ kīlaṃ krāmanti...*'

2) *Bālapaṇḍitasuttam* no. 129, *Majjhima Nikāya* III, II p. 166 : '*tam enaṃ bhikkhave, nirayapāla pañchavidhabandhanan nāma kāraṇaṃ karonti* : *tattaṃ ayokhīlaṃ hatthe gamenti, tattaṃ ayokhīlaṃ dutiye hatthe gamenti, tattaṃ ayokhīlaṃ dutiye pade gamenti, tattaṃ ayokhīlaṃ majjhe urasmiṃ gamenti......*'

3) *Chong-a-han* ed. Tokyo XII, 7, p. 61, Col. 7 ff. :'.. the warders of hell seize them, throw them on the floor made of hot iron completely ablaze, and inflict on them the torture of Five Shackles. They drive points of iron into their two hands and two feet and further also drive one point into their abdomen...'

The condemned ones are fixed to the ground by means of five enormous nails, from which we have the expression—the torture of Five Shackles. It would thus be necessary to correct the text of the *Divyāvadāna* by using the form *ayasau kīlau* twice in place of *klīau* in the first and *kīle* in the second instances. It is probably also essential that we should read *pañchavidha* and not *pañchaviṣaṭa*[20].

Kramanti actually means 'to walk', but there is no doubt that it has been used here as an irregular causative for *kramayanti*. This must have led Burnouf into error.

One notices the frequent use of dual forms in the passage of the Sanskrit *Bālapaṇḍitasūtra* as attested by the citation from the *Divyāvadāna* and also by the Chinese translation. On the contrary the use of these forms is avoided in the corresponding Pāli text.

NOTES

1. The source from which Fa-hien has drawn the information can be precisely indicated. Chapter XXII of his narrative is a faithful summary of the corresponding episode of the *Kuṇālasūtra.*

2. It is necessary to correct the Sanskrit text and read it as *bhikshuścha Bālapaṇḍitasūtraṃ paṭhati.*

3. In Burnouf's translation the description of the last punishment is unintelligible. See Appendix to chapter vii, above.

4. I have already pointed out elsewhere the identity of the 36th sūtra of the *Chong-a-han* and a fragment of the *Parinirvāṇasūtra* of the *Mūla-Sarvāstivādins.* (See *Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha* I. J. A. 1918 pp. 63-74). The comparison which we have proceeded to institute between a passage of the *Divyāvadāna* and the 199th sūtra of the *Chong-a-han* will probably show in a similar manner that the latter collection is a Chinese translation of the *Madhyamāgama* of the Sarvāstivādin School.

5. In the Vedic epoch the messengers of Yama were thought to have been two dogs who kept watch over the gates of hell and occasionally roamed about among living beings. In a passage of the *Atharva-Veda* these are more than two in number and are not also specifically mentioned as dogs (*Atharva-Veda* VIII, 2, 11 ; cf. Muir *Sanskrit Texts* V, note 439). According to the *Devadūtasutta* of the Buddhist *Aṅguttara Nikāya* the infernal messengers are three in number ; they are five in the *Devadūtasutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya.*

6. This notion is common to the Aryans of India and Iran. See *infra* p. 146.

7. The fact that the *Kharoduka* and the *Vaitaraṇī* are two names of the same river is proved by the following verse of the Pāli *Jātaka* (ed. Fausboll VI, p. 250, l. 13): *Khara kharodika tatta dugga Vetaranī nadī* ..

8. Cf. *supra* Chapter IV, note 3. The use of the word *dīṇara* (lat. *denarius*) is also to be noted in the Sanskrit text of that episode. The introduction of the *diṇara* into India is relatively recent.

9. For a discussion of the concept of hell in the Buddhist *Jātakas* see B.C, Law *Heaven and Hell in Buddhist Perspective* Calcutta, 1925, pp. 99-102. The author however makes no reference to the *Saṃkichcha Jātaka* in the context. Also his entire treatment of the subject is limited to material furnished by Pāli literature.—*Translator*.

10. As already noted by Freer (*L'enfer indien* in the J. A, 1892 II p. 188) this list "occurs in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts each time the smile of the Buddha is described there." Regarding the indications that lead us to refer the compilation of the *Avadānaśataka* to the Kashmirian period see *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Feuneraïlles du Buddha* I in the J. A. 1918 I p. 7.

11. Cf. the description of the hells in the *Ta-leu t'an-king* (Nanijo No 551, *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo XIII, 1, pp. 6b ff.), the *K'i-che-king* (Nanijo, no. 551, *Tripiṭakā* XIII, 1, pp. 37a ff.), and the *K'i-che-yin-pen king* (Nanijo no. 549, *Tripiṭaka* XIII, 1, pp. 81a ff.).

12. The superposition of the eight blazing hells is clearly indicated in an extract from the *Chen-p'o-sa luen* cited in the *Chu-king-yao-tsi*: (*Tripīṭaka* Tokyo ed. XXXVI, 2, p, 32b). The bottom of the great hell *Avīchi* is a depth of 40,000 yojanas. The *Avīchi* has a thickness of 20,000 yojanas and the seven other hells above arranged gradually one over another, have a total thickness of 19,000 yojanas.

13. In the time of Masudi the Demavent was still a fully active volcano (cf. *Les Prairies d' Or* trans. Barbier de Meynaıd, Tome I pp. 193 ff.).

14. While the idea of a flaming hell is derived from the notion of the subterranean fire, the latter may have been developed independently of the former. One is a purely cosmological concept ; the other is at the same time an article of religious faith. The notions appear to have been a little confounded in the Buddhist *Sūtra of the Four Hells.* In Iran on the contrary, these have always remained distinct There was however an important reason for that. The Avestic hell is represented as a foul place and for the followers of Mazdaism fire is a pure and divine element. It is repugnant to the religious conscience of the Iranians to put the two side by side. They limited themselves merely to the admission that a part of hell was heated due to the presence of fire in the neighbourhood. This is at any rate what seems to have been the implication of the passage of the *Bundahis* cited above.

15. Cf. Oldenberg *La Religion Vedique* p. 170. "The aquatic kingdom of Varuṇa possessed in early Vedic times almost nothing of the stamp of constancy and positiveness bestowed on it by later mythology".

16. In an inscription from Nanaghat written probably during the second half of the second century B. C., the earth is called, *sagaragiiivaravala(yā)ya* "having for its girdle the ocean and the best among the mountains." (Burgess *Archaeological Survey of Western India* Vol. V p, 60). It appears that from this time the fusion of the respective cosmologies of India and Iran had been an accomplished fact. (The reference is to the Nanaghat inscription of the Sātavāhana queen Nāganikā. Dr. D. C. Sircar places the epigraph in the first century B. C. on palaeographic grounds. cf. *Select Inscriptions* Vol. I, Calcutta 1942, p. 186.—*Translator).*

17. Compare for example the formula *yan me manasā vacha, karmaṇa va duṣkṛitam kṛitam.........(Taittiriya Āraṇyaka* X, 1, 12) and that of the *Dhammapada* (verse 391)—*Yassa kāyena vachāya manasā natthi dukkatam............* Numerous references shall be found in Max Muller *Dhammapadam* with reference to verse 96 and in the article of Nariman 'Quelques paralleles entre le Bouddhisme et le Parsisme' *Revue d' Histoire des Religions*. T. LXV, pp. 79 ff.

18. See Feer *Le Sūtra d' Upāli* p. 8. In this monograph Feer has sought to emphasise the importance of the triad for the Buddhists and the Jainas.

19. Cf. Oldenberg *La Religion Vedique* p. 456 : " 'Thou shalt see the two kings who revel in the feast of souls, Yama and the god Varuṇa'. This is addressed to the deceased person whose funeral is being performed. (*Ṛig Veda* X. 14. 7.) Varuṇa undoubtedly comes in by his right as the sovereign of the gods—who presides over the realm of light, and possibly also by virtue of his august function of distinguishing the innocent from the sinner."

20. P. L. Vaidya in his new edition of the *Divyāvadāna* adopts the old reading *pañchaviṣaṭa* (*Divyāvadānam* Darbhanga 1959, p. 236).—*Translator*.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT OF ESCHATOLOGICAL IDEAS IN BUDDHISM

In the beginning of the Introduction we have traced schematically the route followed by the Buddhist missionaries towards the north-west. We have shown how the new faith gradually gained ground and planted itself first in Mathurā and then in the valley of the Indus. Considering the facts simply as a whole, the general outline of the evolution seems quite clear. But the reality must have been more complex with regard to detail. It would be far from correct to maintain that Buddhism always manifested its power of expansion without failure or interruption. It sometimes happened that after having settled down in a particular country, the monks were expelled from it as a result of some local revolution or foreign invasion. New efforts then became necessary to recapture the area which had been conquered once before. Nowhere were these alternatives of advance and retreat more frequent than in the regions of the north-west where the political situation since the death of Alexander down to the beginning of the Christian era very often remained troubled. More than once the monasteries were pillaged and the monks dispersed by hordes of invaders from Upper Asia. Even before they had fully settled down, the victors had submitted to the intellectual and spiritual ascendancy of the vanquished. The religious beliefs of the invaders got mixed with those of the Indians. The monks availed themselves of the occasional periods of lull in between the invasions to rebuild the ruined stūpas and monasteries. But often a new invasion would destory the results of their efforts Down to the reign of Kanishka the situation thus remained unstable. The foundation of the Kushan empire ultimately re-established peace and order and since then the whole of Asia had become the field of activity of the missionaries.

What happened to the Church of Mathurā during the period of the said invasions ? Menaced by the hosts pouring in from the north-west, the monks naturally looked for shelter in the south and the east. Kauśāmbī was a place of safety ; it had a very large number of monasteries. Quite naturally a great many fugitives came to find asylum there. The story of the Destruction of the Law inserted in many recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* furnishes in effect valuable indications regarding this period.

The Buddha's prediction regarding the disappearance of the Law forms part of two recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna*. In the A. W. Ch. it immediately follows the chapter on the conversions performed by Upagupta. In chapter 25 of the *Tsa-a-han-king* it precedes the *avadāna* of the gift of half of the Āmalaka. Besides an analogous prediction is to be found in the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* which has been translated into Chinese by Than-king (Nanijo No. 382). The basis of the story is the same in all these three recensions : a bloody fight between two monks at Kauśāmbī on the day of *upasotha* brought about the ruin of the Law. But while the two texts inserted in the recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* probably point to the epoch of the invasions, the third appears to be much later.

In the A. W. Ch. the Buddha is found to say to the *Devarāja* of the Northern Quarters : "In future three cruel monarchs would appear, the first named Śaka, the second, Yavana and the third Pahlava. They will persecute the people and destroy the Law of the Buddha." (cf. *Tripiṭaka* ed. Tokyo, XXIV, 10, p. 25a). In the *Tsa-a-han* the cruel monarchs are four in number viz. king Pahlava, in the west, king Yavana in the north, king Śaka in tha south, and king Tukhāra in the east (cf. *Tripiṭaka* ed. Toykyo XIII, 3, p. 49a, Col. 5). There is no doubt regarding the identity of these conquerors. The Śaka chiefs or the Scythians reigned at Mathurā, the Yavanas were the Greeks and the Pahlavas, the Parthians. To the list of these races the *Tsa-a-han* adds the Tukhāras, i. e. the Yue-chi people (cf. Lévi and Chavannes *Les Seize Arhat* p. 272). In fact the invasions of the Indo-Greeks, Scythians and Parthians had preceded that of the Yue-chi. The latter hunted out by the Hiung-nu, drove before them as

they moved, the Scythian and the Parthian tribes who had overrun northern India and were now ultimately submerged under the wave of Yue-chi invasion. The prediction recorded in the A. W. Ch. which speaks only of the first uncertain stages of the invasion is thus probably prior to that of the *Tsa-a-han* which knows the Yue-chi.

In the *Aśokāvadāna* the Buddha is found to predict that his Law would last a thousand years. In the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* however he fixes a longer life-span for it viz. fifteen hundred years from the moment of his Parinirvāṇa. These fifteen centuries were to be marked,-after the deaths of Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda,—by the apostleship of seven patriarchs who would appear successively at intervals of a century. The first of this series of seven would be Upagupta who would convert King Aśoka ; the last, Nāgārjuna would live seven hundred years after the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha. It can therefore be assumed that the redaction of the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* is posterior to Nāgārjuna. From this positive premise we can directly arrive at certain probable conclusions. The sixth patriarch is Aśvaghosha who was to appear six hundred years after the Parinirvāṇa. Now this great poet is sure to have lived either during or after the reign of Kanishka, since the latter is mentioned in his works (cf. *Sūtrālaṃkāra* trans. Huber pp. 80, 158). If Nāgārjuna was separated from his predecessor by the interval of a century, he must have flourished in the second century A. D. at the earliest[1]. Besides, while according to the *Aśokāvadāna* the Law of the Buddha must last one thousand years the author of the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* prolongs the period of the realisation of the prophesy by five centuries Probably the change would not have appeared necessary to him if he had not been conscious of himself living more than thousand years after the Parinirvāṇa and consequently more than three hundred years after Nāgārjuna. In other words the author of the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* had extended the date of the destruction of the Law because, having found the millenary spoken of by the earlier texts to be over, he considered it indispensable to put the prophesy of the Buddha in harmony with facts. It may therefore be admitted that this author had lived three hundred years after Nāgārjuna, that is to say, as early as the 5th

century A. D. Since the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* was translated into Chinese sometime between A, D. 550 and A. D. 570, we can assume that the text is probably not anterior to A. D. 400 and not posterior to A. D. 550.

In case we choose to leave aside this late work there still remain two earlier prophesies one incorporated in the A.W.Ch. and the other in the *Tsa-a-han*. The latter is pretty nearly an exact reproduction of the former except that it mentions the Yue-chi. This particular "brings us to the period following the birth of Christ" (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 272). The prophesy contained in the A.W.Ch. which notices the invasions of the Scythians and the Parthians but ignores that of the Kushans, must have been composed sometime between the beginning of these invasions and the foundation of the Kushan empire, that is to say, approximately during the first century before Christ.

Did this fragment in question form part of the original text of the *Aśokāvadana* or had it been a subsequent addition to it? The first alternative can be ruled out for various reasons. So far as the author of the *Aśokāvadāna* is concerned, his philosophy of history may be thus summed up: the patriarchs have prepared the ground for the advent of Upagupta who, by means of his supernatural powers and innumerable conversions, assures the triumph of Good over Evil. The Law certainly would not last more than one thousand years, but its ultimate destruction is a remote event which no longer holds any great terror for the faithful. The author of the prophesy incorporated in the A.W.Ch. however regards the worst calamities as approaching. Already the cruel monarchs had proved a menace to the Church which was going to succumb under the assaults of its enemies and due to the sins of its adherents. It is impossible to exaggerate the radical difference between the two mental attitudes. The glorious legend of Upagupta and the sombre apocalypse attached to the A.W.Ch. could not simply have been produced by the same hand. The former must have been composed during the period when the Doctrine was making rapid progress in the north and the south, and the latter, while the Barbarians were threatening to destroy everything.

The above hypothesis is confirmed also by other facts. The account of the Council in the A.W.Ch. is preceded by a short description of the Parinirvāṇa of Śākyamuni. Before the attainment of Nirvāṇa, the Buddha summons Śakra and the four *Devarājas*. He entrusts them with the task of protecting the Law but does not make any allusion to the circumstances leading to its destruction in future. A little later after the death of the Master, Śakra addressing himself to Vaiśramaṇa, announces to him the advent of three cruel kings in future who would destroy the Law of the Buddha. Finally, in the chapter before the last, of the A.W.Ch.[8] which is in fact missing in the A.W.K. the Buddha is seen making a long prediction in the presence of the *Devarājas* regarding the troubles that shall follow the ruin of the Doctrine. Thus in the middle of the A.W.Ch, the destruction of the Law which is never alluded to by the Buddha, is announced in a few words by Śakra. Towards the end of the book however, the same prophesy in a much more developed form, is placed in the mouth of the Buddha himself. If the whole of the A.W.Ch. had been by a single author, one would not have noticed these incoherencies there. The long prophesy which is missing in the A.W.K., must have been added to the *Aśokāvadāna* during the period of the invasions ; and the few words spoken by Śakra after the Parinirvāṇa of Śākyamuni are probably an interpolation meant to render authentic the same apocryphal prophesy by noticing it in connection with the Account of the Council which had the weight of a canonical text.

This piece of interpolation appears to be a little earlier than the chapter before the last of the A.W.Ch. It points to the times when the prophesy had already been current among masses of the faithful, but when the writers of sacred texts hesitated as yet to attribute it to the Buddha. The monks were not blind to the fact that in the ancient texts of the *Parinirvāṇa-sūtra* the Buddha is found to predict neither the destiny of the Law nor the invasions of the Barbarians. Before they had decided to record the prophesy as coming from the Buddha himself, they were content to impute it to Śakra. This timid innovation already finds place in the A.W.K. which old recension however does not include the prophesy in a fully developed form.

The whole thing therefore can be briefly summed up in the following manner: (a) the turbulent tribes threatening the safety of the Church during the early years of the period of invasions, form the object of a prophesy that the clergy at first puts in a concise shape in the mouth of Śakra the king of the gods (cf. the account of the Council in the A.W K. and the A.W,Ch.); (b) this prophesy rapidly becomes so popular that the writers decide to describe it in detail and attribute it to the Buddha himself (cf. the chapter before the last, of the A,W Ch.); (c) finally, after the invasion of the Yue-Chi the list of the barbarian rulers is completed by the addition of the Kushans (cf. the *Tsa-a-han-king*).

These conclusions have an important corollary so far as the date of the *Aśokāvadāna* is concerned. We have already seen that the author of this text had utilised an earlier redaction of the Aśoka-legend which was posterior to the death of Pushyamitra (c. 150 B.C) Besides, he wrote before the period of the invasions which seems to have started from the early years of the first century B.C.[3] We shall not therefore be very far from the truth in admitting tentatively that the *Aśokāvadāna* had been composed sometime between 150 B.C. and 100 B.C.

The first of these dates recalls great events of political and literary history viz. the foundation of the empire of Menander and the composition of the Great Commentary (*Mahābhashya*) of Patañjali. Although regarding these capital events we are obliged to rely on mere conjectures, it appears that towards 155 B.C., the Indo-Greek ruler Menander invaded the Gangetic basin, entered Mathurā and laid the foundation of a vast empire that extended from the port of Barygaza to the frontiers of Magadha. We cannot definitely affirm that he had been converted to Buddhism[4]; he was at least however a tolerant chief and in this respect the policy of this foreigner was opposed to that of the Brāhmaṇa Pushyamitra. The wide distribution of his currency as well as the great respect attached to his name in the Scriptures, leads us to think that during his reign, there existed brisk commercial relations between the Indus valley and the rest of his dominions, and also, that Buddhist missionary activities received a new impulse. About the same time Patañjali wrote his commentary on Pāṇini and

the work of this grammarian sufficiently indicates a renaissance of the Sanskrit language and literature. The hour was thus opportune for the appearance of new literary works. Protected by a prince as much tolerant as he was foreign, the Buddhist monks were emboldened to write down their Scriptures in the sacred language of the Brāhmaṇas They created a religious literature in Sanskrit of which *Aśokāvadāna* was one of the masterpieces[5].

According to different recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* a little before his death the Buddha had entrusted the custody of his law to Mahākāśyapa, Śakra and four *Devarājas*. In making this effort his intention was to ensure the permanence of his doctrine. The development of eschatological notions relating to the Law, is intimately linked up with the growth of traditions regarding the human or the celestial guardians entrusted with the task of maintaining it.

There are grounds for distinguishing the roles of Mahākāśyapa as Patriarch and as Protector of the Law. As Patriarch he succeeds the Buddha, looks after and collects His precepts and is, ere long, replaced by Ānanda. As Protector of the Law his work continues for centuries ; settled in the Kukkuṭapāda mountain he continues to act as guardian to the sacred doctrine. The second of the two notions appears to be posterior to the first.

In a sūtra of the *Ekottarāgama* which is included among "the six works of Maitreya"[6], the Buddha is found to say to Kāśyapa : "The Tathāgata has at present four great Śrāvakas capable of performing the duties of apostleship and conversion. Their wisdom is unlimited and their virtues have attained the measure of completeness. Who are these four ? They are the bhikshu Mahākāśyapa, the bhikshu Kuṇḍopadhānīya, the bhikshu Piṇḍola and the bhikshu Rāhula. You four great Śrāvakas, it is essential that you should not attain Parinirvāṇa. It is necessary that only after the disappearance of my Law that you should reach the state of Parinirvāṇa. Thou too, Oh Mahākāśyapa ! must not enter Parinirvāṇa" (*Tripiṭaka* Tok. ed. XII, 3, 34b, col. 9 ; *Ibid.*, IV, 5, 48b, col. 5, translated in Lévi and Chavannes *Les Seize Arhat* p. 53). Similarly in the *Śāriputraparipṛichchhā* Śāriputra is found to say to the Buddha :

"How is it Oh Tathāgata, that thou hast said to Śakra Devendra and four heavenly rulers : 'I am going shortly to enter Nirvāṇa. You people, each in his region, protect and maintain my Law. After I have quitted the world, the four great bhikshus Mahākāśyapa, Piṇḍola, Kuṇḍopadhānīya and Rāhula would stay on without attaining Nirvāṇa ; they shall propagate and spread my Law'. (cf. *Tripiṭaka* Tok. ed. XVII, 10, 20a translated in Lévi and Chavannes *Les Leize Arhat* p. 54).

These two texts are more developed than the A.W.K. and the A.W.Ch. In the *Aśokāvadāna* the Buddha before attaining Nirvāṇa is seen confiding the custody of his Law to Mahākāśyapa, Śakra and four *Devarājas*. In the sutra of the *Ekottarāgāma* and as well as in the *Śāriputrapariprichchhā* the Arhat-Protectors of the Law are also four in number so that each region in space may be simultaneously guarded by an Arhat and a *Devarāja*. All these texts have one point in common ; Kāśyapa, according to their description, does not enter the state of Nirvāṇa, even after growing old ; installed in the Kukkuṭapāda hill, he must await there the advent of Maitreya. The development of this idea can be traced without deviating from the tradition of the Sarvāstivādin School.

In the V. M. S. where the life of Mahākāśyapa forms the subject-matter of a very old narrative, the first of the patriarchs is found to be active only for a short period. Reaching the fag end of his life, he enters into Parinirvāṇa. Nevertheless his mortal remains are not destroyed. Covered by the apparel *paṃśukūla* which had been given to him by the Buddha and concealed in the depths of the Kukkuṭapāda hill, his corpse was to last till the advent of Maitreya on earth (cf. J. A. 1914, II pp. 524-26). The rest of the story, however, does not completely tally with its beginning. Ānanda predicts the coming of Maitreya in these words to king Ajātaśatru : "This Blessed One, taking the *saṃghaṭi* of Kāśyapa, will show it to the crowd of disciples and say : "Here is the *saṃghaṭi* given by Buddha Śakyamuni, the perfectly awakened (*Ibid.*, p. 257). A little earlier in the narrative, the reference is merely to the *pāṃśukūla* given by the Buddha and this bit of information is consistent with the account of the canonical texts according to

which Mahākāśyapa recently converted, had given his rich clothes to the Buddha and had received in exchange the *paṃśukūla* of Śākyamuni (cf. *Tsa-a-han* Tokyo XIII, 4, p. 40b). The *paṃśukūla* is a coarse dress made of rags picked up from streets. The *saṃghāṭi* of the Buddha was made of precious fabric. The archaic story of the Vinaya appears to have been retouched by a subsequent compiler who had replaced *pāṃśukūla* by *saṃgāhṭi* in the prediction of Ānanda, in order to raise the prestige of Kāśyapa. This hypothesis is confirmed by the analysis of the corresponding text of the *Aśokāvadāna*.

In the A. W. K. the Parinirvāṇa of Mahākaśyapa is recounted in the same manner as in the V. M. S. Ānanda predicts that Buddha Maitreya will show to his disciples the corpse, the *pāṃśukūla* and the *saṃghāṭi* of Mahākāśyapa and will say to them : "This is the *saṃghāṭi* of Buddha Śākyamuni". The point of innovation is the same here as in the V. M. S. ; however the mention of the *saṃghāṭi* does not exclude that of the *paṃśukūla* (*Tripiṭaka* Tok. Ed. XXIV, 10, 50a, Col. 6).

In the A. W. Ch. Mahākāśyapa, old and worn out, at first expresses the desire of entering into Parinirvāṇa. Then sitting on the summit of mount Kukkuṭapāda he is seen reflecting thus : "Now, this my body is clothed by the apparel *pāṃśukūla* that the Buddha has given me. I hold my begging bowl in my hand. Oh that these might not be putrefied till the day when Maitreya shall descend on earth, and when the disciples of Maitreya would be filled with aversion and distaste on seeing my decomposed body ;" All these traits are quite consistent with the themes of the archaic tales found in the V. M. S. and the A. W. K. But what follows is however very different. The patriach does not enter into Parinirvāṇa at all ; this is proved by the description that on the day of the advent of Maitreya, the body of Mahākāśyapa preserved in a state of trance "shall leap up in the air, manifest eighteen kinds of transformation and alter itself into a colossal shape. Afterwards Maitreya drawing out the *saṃghāṭi* of Buddha Śākyamuni that had covered the body of Kāśyapa shall reveal its marvellous transformations. The 9,600,000 śramaṇas shall be profoundly ashamed on seeing the little body sparkle with

the virtues of the Path and in complete possession of supernatural insight...". There is thus a sharp contrast between the beginning and the end of the story. At first, the patriarch, clothed in the *pāṃśukūla* of the Buddha desires to attain Parinirvāṇa and wishes that the disciples of Maitreya be filled with loathing at the sight of his putrid corpse. Later he is found dressed in the *saṃghāṭi* of the Buddha ; he remains plunged in ecstacy without attaining Nirvāṇa and the disciples of Maitreya, instead of experiencing aversion in his presence, find his body radiant with the virtues of the Path. The first part reproduces the ancient texts which describe Kāśyapa still only as a Patriarch ; the rest shows him as raised to the rank of the Protector of the Law. The accounts of the V. M. S., the A. W. K. and the opening sections of the corresponding text of the A. W. Ch. are found still to adhere to the primitive beliefs ; the *Śāriputraparipṛichchā* forming the concluding portion of the A. W. Ch. and the 'Maitreyan' sūtra of the *Ekottarāgama* belong to a new stream of tradition. Texts like the V. M. S., the A. W. K. and the A. W. Ch. are the productions of the Sarvāstivādin School. It appears, that among the Sarvāstivādins the development of tradition has been early influenced by the messianic belief in Maitreya, the future Buddha. What is the position in this respect of the opposite School of Kauśāmbī ?

In the Pāli *Suttanipāta* the future Saviour, has a concrete human proto-type though much blurred, for it is probable that the disciple Tissametteya of the third sutta of the Pārāyana is no other than Bodhisattva Maitreya. Moreover a prophesy of Buddha Śākyamuni regarding the future Buddha occurs simultaneously in the 6th sūtra of the *Dīrghāgama* translated into Chinese and in the 26th sutta of the Pāli *Dīghanikāya* ; but while the Pāli text goes only to moderate length as regards Maitreya and his acts, the same subject is exhaustively developed in the *Dīrghāgama* (cf. Peri—review of Matsumoto in the *B. E. F E O.* XI p. 455). The history of Chakravartin Śaṅkha and that of Buddha Maitreya are both narrated in the 66th sūtra of the Chinese translation of the *Madhyamāgama* ; we however miss this text in the Pāli *Majjhimanikāya* (cf. J. A. 1919, II pp. 425-28). These indications

are sufficient to show that messianic beliefs do not hold a very important place in the Pāli Canon. The development of the religious ideas regarding Maitreya is a characteristic feature of the Sarvāstivādin School and the Mahāyāna sects. The Sthaviravādins have followed the movement only from a distance and without any real interest.

Mahākāśyapa, whose legend is closely linked with that of Maitreya among the Sarvāstivādins, does not play an equally important role in the tradition of the Sthavira School. With the latter Upāli is the first of the patriarchs. Mahākāśyapa having received the heritage of the doctrine from the Buddha, does not here become, as in the *Aśokāvadāna*, the great Arhat-Protector of the Law. At Kauśāmbī this responsibility is found early to have been assumed by a local saint Piṇḍola as is revealed by an analysis of the *Aśokasūtra*.

Thus from the very beginning the two schools clearly oppose each other in everything concerning eschatological notions : at Mathurā Mahākāśyapa the first patriarch becomes Protector of the Law and as such he remains in the world till the advent of Maitreya ; at Kauśāmbī, it is Piṇḍola who is found to perform this function, but without his legend having anything do with that of the future Buddha.

It appears therefore, that the later texts of the Chinese Tripiṭaka viz. the Maitreyan sūtra of the *Ekottarāgama* and the *Śāriputraparipṛichchhā* have originated alike from the two rival traditions. At this stage Kāśyapa and Piṇḍola guard the Law side by side at the same time like two confederates with Kundopadhānīya and Rāhula as their assistants to keep up the parity. The hybrid character of these texts also manifests itself in another way. According to the A. W. Ch. Mahākāśyapa is to remain in the world till the appearance of Maitreya ; in the *Aśokasūtra* Pīṇḍola is prevented from attaining Nirvāṇa so long as the Law does not die out. This difference is not entirely obliterated in the Maitreyan sūtra of the *Ekottarāgama*. The Buddha here is found to say : "You four great Śrāvakas, it is essential that you do not attain Parinirvāṇa. It is necessary that you should enter into Parinirvāṇa only after the final extinction of my Law. Thou too, Oh Mahākāśyapa ! thou must not enter into Parinirvāṇa !" The particular injunction

addressed to Kāśyapa implies that this disciple must not have the same fate as his companions. Here, as in the earlier sources, the respective exiles of Kāśyapa and Piṇḍola have different terminations : the former must await the coming of the future Messiah ; Piṇḍola and the two other Śrāvakas are to continue to be watchful till the final extintion of the Law.

What is the length of time that had been fixed originally for the duration of the Law on earth ? According to the *Aśokāvadāna* as well as a large number of other texts[7] the Law would pass out after a millennium. Elsewhere its anticipated duration is five hundred years. The former of these notions is obviously the earliest and the most widespread.

In the story of the First Council as narrated in the V.M.S. Mahākāśyapa is seen blaming Ānanda for having interceded before the Master in favour of Mahā-Prajāpati when the latter had expressed her desire to embrace the faith. Had women not been permitted to renounce the world, the Law might have lasted longer. Its duration came to be limited to a period of ten centuries because the Master had consented to give ordination to women (*Tripiṭaka* Tokyo Ed. XVII, 2 p. 90a). The same indiscretion followed by the same consequences is ascribed to Ānanda in many other accounts of the First Council, notably in the Recension of Kāśyapa (*Tripiṭaka* Tok. Ed. XXIV, 8, p. 36b), the Narrative of the Compilation of the Three Piṭakas (*Ibid.*, XXIV, 8, p. 33b) and the *Feu-pie-kong-to-luen* (*Ibid.*, XXIV, 4, p. 51b). But the *P'i-ni-mu-king* presents an instructive variant. After having enumerated the multiple inconveniences of the order of nuns, Kāśyapa adds : "If women had not been permitted to take orders, the true Law of the Buddha would have lasted a thousand years. Now its duration would be reduced to a period of five centuries......" And a little later he is found to repeat in verse : "The true Law was to have reigned on earth for a whole millennium. Five centuries have been curtailed from that period......" (*Tripiṭaka* Tok. Ed. XVII, 9, p. 15a). Thus the majority of texts would assign to the Law a life-span of thousand years, and the *P'i-ni-mu-king* that limits the period to five centuries, also indicates that originally it was twice that length. It is permissible to conjecture

that it was a time when the belief in a millennium was general in the Buddhist Church.[8]

Among the Sarvāstivādins this notion already finds expression in the A.W.K.; it can be subsequently traced in the A.W.Ch., the *Tsa-a-han* and even in the V.M.S. It appears thus to have passed through the Mathurā and Kashmir periods without modification. But it may be for all we know, a false appearance and from the permanence of the formulae we need not always necessarily infer the stability of the notions. The authors who drew up the apocalyptic prophesies of the A.W.Ch. and the *Tsa-a-han* were convinced of being witnesses to the process of the decline of the Law. The political troubles that had unsettled conditions in northern India, were in their eyes forerunners of the ultimate destruction of the doctrine. Now, the Parinirvāṇa of Śākyamuni did not seem to to them an event far remote. Of course the chronological systems current within the Buddhist Church differed a great deal from one another; it may however be admitted that the writers of the same school were to some extent in agreement over the estimate of the historical periods. According to the V.M.S. Aśoka had reigned one hundred years after the Parinirvāṇna of the Master and Kanishka, four centuries after the same event. In the *Aśokāvadāna* Aśoka is similarly found to reign a century after the Buddha. The visionary who must have drafted the prophesy occuring in the A, W. Ch. and who lived apparently before the Yue-Chi invasion, could not have been conscious of being separated from the Buddha by an interval of more than four centuries. And since the end of the Law appeared near to him, we must infer that his faith in the prophesy of a millennnium had been shaken by events. This conclusion will not seem an exaggeration if it is noted that some writers such as the author of the *P'i-ni-mu-king*, are not afraid of breaking with tradition by asserting that the duration of the Law was reduced to half.

Later when the storm had blown itself over and the conversion of Kanishka had restored the hope of the faithful, the old prophesy of a millennium ceased to be doubted; the Law had emerged victorious from the ordeal of invasions; it was no longer doubted that it would be able to maintain itself on

earth for a fairly long period. Afterwards, ten centuries having elapsed without leading to any catastrophe, the realisation of the prophesy was put further off by a period of five hundred years. According to the author of the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* the Law was to die out 1500 years after the Parinirvāṇa of Śākyamuni. Finally, when Buddhism had been definitely established among the Turks and the Chinese, eschatological notions took a new turn. The Law might have disappeared in India but not among other nations. It was to have the same fate as the sacred bowl of the Buddha. Broken to pieces in India by the barbarous ruler Mihirakula, this vase directed its steps towards the northern countries. The inhabitants of these lands made all sorts of offerings to it and through the efficacy of the Buddha his broken bowl "once more became by itself such as it had been previously, without any difference" (Sylvain Lévi *Notes Chinoises sur l'Inde* B.E.F.E.O. VI, pp. 46 ff.).

Wherefrom did the notion of millennium arise ? We think, this extension of time, once recognised, had been curtailed or prolonged, in similar historical circumstances. It is more difficult to imagine why people, convinced of the excellence of the doctrine, believed that it would disappear after ten centuries. Undoubtedly a religious persecution as that of Pushyamitra, could have helped the growth of the opinion that the Law had succumbed to an attack by the impious. In fact the concept of the destruction of the Law appears at first, to have been associated with the name of Piṇḍola in the *Aśokasūtra* which was probably written at Kauśāmbī shortly after the death of the first Śuṅga ruler. But why should it be believed so early that the Law would last one thousand years ? A persecution must have on the contrary suggested the idea that the ruin of the faith was imminent. Why should a date extended by many more centuries be chosen for the event ? Since we do not find in primitive Buddhism or in the circumstances of its development any explanation of this belief in a millennium, we must necessarily look for it elsewhere.

In the Scriptures of Mazdaism, the idea that our world has a limited existence, occurs repeatedly. The struggle of Ahura Mazda against Aṅgra Mainyu is there the central event

of history. The world will, according to the Mazdaic concept, come to an end or rather be renewed by the ultimate defeat of evil, the destruction of hell and the triumph of Ahura. The victory of Good will be due to the efforts of pious people,—the *saosyants*, having as their head the hero who personifies all of them—the Saviour, *Saosyant*. These personages are already mentioned in the Gāthās of the Avesta. Their apocalyptic character emerges clearly from the form of the word *saosyant* itself which is a future participle.

Saosyant and his auxiliaries would appear just when this world will come to an end. They would annihilate the sinners. By his efforts Saosyant would bestow physical immortality on all creatures (*Yasht* XIX, 95). Afterwards·burning metal shall purify the earth and destroy hell. The mountains encircling the earth shall break up and disappear ; the earth shall resemble a vast plain.

These events shall be brought about through a progressive amelioration of the human race. During the epoch preceding the end of the world humanity would be spiritualised ; men shall have no need for any food and their bodies shall no longer project any shadows. These are certainly very old ideas ; already they are found recorded in the writings of Theopompus (4th century B. C.) from which they had made their way into the pages of Plutarch (cf. Soderblom p. 254).

Another characteristic element in the religious conceptions of Mazdaism is the division of the history of the world into periods of thousand years. These successive epochs are twelve in number. A mythical or legendary hero is generally found to preside over them. The happy reign of Yima would last a thousand years (*Yasht* XVII, 30). Zarathustra was to appear in the beginning of the tenth millennium. This chronology is known chiefly to the *Dinkard* and the *Bundahis*. It is difficult to say about what time it was organised into a coherent system. The concept of millennium on which it rests is in any case, very old.

The author of the *Bahman Yasht* looks forward to "a short period dominated by evil at the end of the millennium of Zarathustra" (West *Pahlavi Texts* I p. LV). This theme is developed in detail in Pehlvi literature. The more the texts

are recent, the darker is the table of calamities marking the closing years of the millennium of Zarathustra (cf. Soderblom pp. 272 ff.).

It appears that Avestic eschatology contained two distinct elements. On the one hand during the period preceding the dissolution of the world, there would be, it is supposed, an amelioration of the conditions of the human race,—a development which was ultimately to be crowned by the advent of the Saosyants ; on the other Zarathustra is found to preside over a period of thousand years the closing years of which shall be marked by disorders and the preponderance of evil. In Pehlvi literature the description of these troubles particularly draws our attention. Alarmed at the calamities that over-power the faithful since the invasion of Alexander down to the Islamic conquest, the followers of Mazdaïsm concentrate their thought on the evils accompanying the concluding years of the Zarathustra-millennium. However the development of these apocalyptic ideas leaves intact the faith in the advent of the Saviour after the twelvth millennium.

This evolution of ideas is parallel to that of Buddhist eschatology. The Avestic belief in the coming of Saosyant has for equivalent in India the doctrine concering the future Messiah Maitreya. A comparison between these two personages have already been instituted by Grunwedel (Grunwedel-Burgess *Buddhist Art* p. 190). It is important to observe that the analogy does not limit itself merely to a vague resemblance. One reads in the *Sūtra of Maitreya becoming Buddha* that when Tathāgata Maitreya shall manifest himself on earth, the extent of Jambudvīpa shall increase exactly by 10,000 yojanas. The ground shall be smooth and glossy like a mirror made of *lieu-li* (*vaidūrya*) ....." (Tokyo IV, 5 p. 40b translated by Sylvain Lévi and Chavannes *Les Seize Arhat* p. 14 note 2). The earth is also to grow smooth and level with the coming of Saosyant ; even the mountain supporting the bridge Cinvat shall disappear (*Bundahis* XXX, 33).

According to the *Accounts of Nandimitra on the duration of the Law*, in the time of Maitreya "all men have compassionate hearts and they practise the ten good actions. Their longevity increases because they observe the ten

rules of conduct ; prosperity and happiness are firmly established.... While working in the field men reap seven times the amount they have sown and the harvest itself ripens without it being necessary to clean or to dig the field......" (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 14). Likewise according to the *Dinkard*, at the end of time people will have increased to millions and the span of life would be longer. Happiness will increase in the world. A luxurious vegetation shall cover the face of earth (*Dinkard* VII, Chapter X, 7—11 ; Chapter XI, 4).

Before the arrival of Saosyant on the scene, the ancient heroes of Iran are found to wake up and make ready the work of the Saviour. The strongest and the most famous of them is Keresāspa. Wounded by an arrow during sleep he fell into a state of torpor. He is however said to have been protected by innumerable *fravasis* down to the last phase of the earth's existence. Then we see him waking up and helping the Saviour in the latter's struggle against evil (cf. Soderblom p. 250). This legend makes us necessarily think of the one about Mahākāśyapa asleep in his mountain resort and protected by *yakshas*. (J. A. 1914, II, p. 527) while awaiting the coming of the future Buddha Maitreya.

The analogies already established between Saosyant and maitreya, suggest moreover another camparison. Saosyant and his auxiliaries, it is supposed, shall bring the dead to life. In the sūtras concerning Maitreya, along with the Messiah there appears a powerful Chakravartin named Śaṅkha. This name assumes a new significance, if it is noted that in the *Sūtra of Maitreya becoming Buddha* Mahākāśyapa, roused from his prolonged slumber, comes back to life at the sound of conches (*śaṅkha*) (Peri—review of Matsumoto, *B. E. F. E. O.* XI p, 455). Chakravartin Śaṅkha is a reincarnation of Śāriputra. The attribute from which he derives his name, possibly indicates that in imitation of the auxiliaries of Saosyant this disciple of the Buddha is described as being reborn in the time of Maitreya in order to help the Messiah to revive the dead. In case this conjecture be based on truth, the Christian trumpet of the Last Judgment must be supposed to have an equivalent in the Buddhist traditions relating to Maitreya.

The moment Iranian influences are recognised on the

development of Buddhist eschatology, the appearance of the belief in millenniums in the works of the Mathurā School ceases any longer to be mysterious. This concept had probably been introduced into India at the same time as the Mazdaic notions regarding the constitution of hell and the advent of the Messiah.

As to the flowering of the apocalyptic ideas in India during the period of the invasions, it is not at all necessary to think of any foreign influence, in order to render an account of it. The eschatological theories transported to the Buddhist world from Iran since the Mathurā period must necessarily have struck deep roots in a land already convulsed by hordes of invaders. Nevertheless the evolution of religious ideas during the Kashmirian period testifies to the persistence of occidental influences.

The prophesy concerning the duration of the Law and the legend of Maitreya have been treated separately in the *Aśokāvadāna*. The former is narrated in the chapter on the Council and the latter after the account of Mahākāśyapa's life. If we go back to the later texts we shall find these elements blending into a system curiously analogous to the one occuring in Pehlvi literature.

According to the *Dinkard* and the *Bahman Yasht* the foundation of religion by Zarathustra marks the beginning of the tenth millennium so that after this event the world must yet continue to exist for three more phases of thousand years each. The troubles that fill the concluding years of the Zarathustra-millennium are to be followed by the advent of Uxsyatereta. Thousand years later would come the turn of Uxsyat-nemah. Finally, yet thousand years after, when twelve millenniums of creation have passed and when the end of the world is near, there would appear the last benefactor of the series, Saosyant the victorious.

Let us compare this chronology of the order of succession of the future periods, with the Account of Nandimitra. Following the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha the six Arhats protect and maintain the Law till the time when human life becomes extremely short its actual span being ten years. "At that moment the Law of the Buddha is to disappear suddenly.

After the violences of armed battles human longevity would gradually increase and ultimately reach hundred years. Then men shall be weary of the miseries and evils produced earlier by the sword and other weapons of war and it would once more please them to perform good action. During this time these six great Arhats would reappear among men with their entourage. They would proclaim and explain clearly the correct and the highest Law......... The correct and the highest Law would be propagated in the world ; it would shine brightly and unceasingly. Then would arrive an epoch during which men will enjoy a longevity of seventy thousand years ; afterwards the correct and the highest Law would be extinguished for ever" (*Les Seize Arhat* p. 12). The six Arhats would enter into Parinirvāṇa. Afterwards seventy thousand *koṭis* of Pratyeka-Buddhas would make their appearance and when there arrives the epoch during which men are to live for eighty thousand years, the Pratyeka-Buddhas would in their turn enter into Parinirvāṇa. After this Maitreya is to manifest himself on earth.

One notices in the text an irresponsible use of staggering numbers which is a general characteristic of Mahayāna literature. But although on a much greater scale, the plan here is the same as in the Pehlvi texts. In both the sources the interval between the founder of the Religion and the Messiah is divided symmetrically into three principal periods and the end of each of these is marked by troubles that follow the advent of new sages : among the Mazdians, Uxsyat-ereta, Uxyat-nemah and Saosyant ; among the Buddhists, the six Arhats, the Pratyeka-Buddhas and Maitreya.

The presence of foreign elements in Buddhist eschatology must not however make us lose sight of its original character. By the side of elements borrowed from Mazdian mythology, the prophesies regarding the future of the Law appended to tha *Aṣokāvadāna* reveal to certain extent the environment in which these have been conceived and the circumstances in which these have been written. This, we have already seen, enables us to fix their approximate date ; one may moreover glean from them useful indications regarding the internal life of the communities during the period of the invasions.

The texts agree among themselves in placing at Kauśambī the events leading to the ruin of the Law. While cruel monarchs would reign elsewhere, the soverign of Kauśambī would be converted to Buddhism and would provide security to the bhikshus. He would load with presents the śramaṇas united in his capital so that the latter would be induced to lead a life of ease and relaxation and cease to study the Scriptures. This account no doubt describes the society in which the author of the prophesy had himself lived. There is a clearly marked contrast between the regions of the north where the monks were being persecuted and the land of Kauśambī where they lived in abundance and luxury. This opposition appears to conform to historical truth. The Scythian and Parthian invaders did not penetrate into the lower Gangetic valley and the monks hunted out of Taxila, the Punjab and Mathurā could secure asylum in the monasteries of Kauśambī. The situation was not altogether unlike the one that had arisen previously in the reign of Pushyamitra. Persecuted in the north, the śramaṇas in our opinion had taken refuge on that occasion in the same manner in the southern provinces governed by Agnimitra.

The tranquillity which the monks of Kauśambī had always enjoyed, did not increase their propensity to asceticism. The mildness of th[illegible]imate and the abundance of the resources in the land served further to soften them. Hiuen Tsang praises the fertility of the kingdom and the happy and relaxed disposition of the inhabitants,-who were lovers of the arts and inclined to give generous alms to the monks. When the lay populace is charitable the monks are rarely found to be austere. It is not probably an accident that Piṇḍola the great saint of Kauśambī had the reputation of being a glutton and that Mahākāśyapa 'the earliest of those who practised the *dhūtāṅgas*' had never been very popular among the Sthaviras. The latter no doubt, had great respect for Upāli, the master of the *Vinaya* but, after all, what is the *Vinaya*, except a body of rules destined to legitimise the abandonment of the primitive *dhūtāṅgas* ? The prophesy on the destruction of the Law enables us to understand that the laxity of the monks of Kauśambī was a matter of scandal to the bhikshus of other regions One may easily imagine the indignation of the ascetics of the Punjab

and Kashmir, who, forced to escape after having witnessed the ruin of their own monasteries, came to observe the somewhat easy morals of the communities of the South. They could no longer doubt that the end of the Law was near. Here there was slackness and negligence all around ; and there in their own land was massacre and ruin. Such appeared the picture of the Church in the eyes of the visionary who composed the Apocalypse contained in the A. W. Ch.

There were moreover other reasons to despair of the future. The gathering of the representatives of the diverse sects in the same city could not but have provoked discussions and conflicts. The monks devoted to Ānanda clashed with those who had held him responsible for all the misfortunes of the Church. The prophesy throws bright light on their controversies and the quarrels resulting from them.

The bhikshus of all the provinces were assembed at Kauśāmbī on the *uposatha* day. An authority on the Tripiṭaka whose teachings were much respected and followed, had occupied the presidential chair. However when he reached the stage of *bahuśruta-pāramitā* he failed to observe the prohibitions (*śīlas*). Therefore he entreated another monk to recite the *Prātimoksha.* A bhikshu named Sudhara.—the only Arhat present in Jambudvīpa, was about to enumerate the prohibitions when he was put to death by a disciple of the master of the Tripiṭaka. The partisans of the Arhat avenged the latter by killing the authority on the Tripiṭaka ; since that time the communities, deprived of their chiefs, began to break up rapidly. The lamp of the Law was extinguished.

If one would wish to enter into the true spirit of the story, it would no doubt, be essential to read in it a description of the quarrels that divided the monks assembled at Kauśāmbi. The community of bhikshus are divided into two groups : the one, that of *bahuśrutas,*—count on knowledge as the means of attaining Nirvāṇa. They have at their head a Savant who has reached the stage of *bahuśruta-pāramitā* which is to say that he has thoroughly learnt the doctrine, "that which has been heard" (*śruta*). The monks belonging to the other section, affirm that the observance of the prohibitions (*śīlas*) is the better means of obtaining salvation. They have for their

chief the last Arhat, the only monk capable of observing the prohibitions completely. who is a perfect *śīladhara.* The adversaries are so much inflamed that the Arhat and the Savant are both killed in the conflict.

The author of the prophesy has by no means invented the stories about these disorders. He may possibly have painted the events a shade darker than they actually were ; it is however certain that the passionate discussions had set the *bahuśrutas* and the *śīladharas* by the ears (cf. *supra* pp. 27 ff.). Ānanda is the patron of the former. It appears that the Sarvāstivādin School of Mathurā had early manifested sutrist tendencies favourable to Ānanda whereas the Sthaviras of Kauśāmbī preferred Upāli the champion of the Vinaya. We have already come across instances of this rivalry in the accounts of the First Council. Besides, the story of the pilgrimage of Aśoka proves beyond any doubt that Mathurā was a dwelling of choice for the partisans of Ānanda. When the latter, driven back by the invasion, sought asylum in Kauśāmbī, they met there a body of *Śramaṇas* imbued with totally different opinions. The quarrels resulting from the situation must have inspired the tragic scene of the celebration of the *uposatha* : in the account of the prophesy incorporated in the *Aśokāvadāna* the partisans of the great Savant are found to murder the last of the Arhats. This catastrophe is the logical consequence of an antagonism that had already found expression in the prose sections of the account of the First Council. During the interval the two powerful parties that divided the Church became further estranged. Their attitude to each other had become so hostile that disappointed spirits, already troubled by the evils of the invasion, had seen in this rivalry a cause of weakness which was to lead to the ruin of the Law itself.

In the account of the prophesy the brawl starts with the murder of the last Arhat. It is the followers of the great Savant who strike their opponent first and thus bear the responsibility of the excesses that follow. The Savant who knows the Scriptures perfectly but is not an Arhat and cannot observe the *śīlas*, fits in with the personality of Ānanda. By throwing the anathema on his partisans the author of the

prophesy shows that he has no ties whatever with the admirers of Ānanda. He was possibly an ascetic belonging to a northern community, since he stigmatised the corruption of the monks of Kauśāmbī; but it is not at all certain whether he had lived in Mathurā; At all events he did not share the mentality of the author of the *Aśokāvadāna*. If the latter had lived till the time of the invasions and had been advised to compose an Apocalypse he would certainly have reserved the less wicked role for the followers of the great Savant. He would not have shown the *bahuśrūtas* as striking their opponents and thus meriting universal reprobation. Besides, the prophesy regarding the destruction of the Law has been appended to two recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna*; the ideas reflected in it had therefore become current in the Sarvāstivādin School. One may thus measure out the course taken by the developing tradition between the reduction of the *Aśokāvadāna* and the period of the Scythian invasion; and in so doing one is invariably led, after a detour, to the conclusion already formulated in the beginning of this chapter: the prophesy incorporated in the A. W. Ch. is posteriṭor to the *Aśokāvadāna*; both the versions cannot possibly be attributed to the same author.

NOTES

1. Other traditions place Nāgārjuna in the reign of king Sātavāhana and this brings us also to the early centuries of the Christian era.

2. For a French translation of this chapter (Chapter IX) of the A. W. Ch. see Przyluski *La Legende de l'Empereur Aśoka* Part II pp. 399-409—*Translator.*

3. This is the opinion of the majority of historians. Sir John Marshall, the eminent archaeologist, seems to think that the beginning of the invasions should be attributed to an earlier period, but the work in which he seeks to establish this theory has not yet reached Europe. (The author does not specifically refer to any work of Marshall, but if the inroad of the Bactrian Greeks is included in the 'invasions', Marshall must be considered right in his conclusion. It is now universally admitted that the Bactrian Greeks started raiding the Kabul valley and the Punjab during the early decades of the second centuary B. C.—*Translator.*)

4. This also seems to be the view of W. W. Tarn, cf. *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Second Edition, Cambridge, 1951) p 268. But the tradition representted by the *Milindapañha* is quite positive on the point of his conversion to Buddhism. The author clearly states that after listening to Nāgasena Menader's doubts disappeared and he entered the Buddhist order, soon becoming an Arhat (cf. *Puna pi therassa paññāya pasīditvā puttassa rajjaṁ niyyādetvā agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitvā vipassanaṃ vaḍḍhetvā arahattaṃ pāpuṇīti. Milindapañho* ed. V. Trenckner, London, 1880, p. 420). See also T. W. Rhys Davids *The Questions of King Milinda* Part II, S. B. E. Vol. XXXVI. Oxford, 1894, pp. 373-74. Menander's Buddhist faith is also possibly indicated by the story recorded by

Plutarch, how after his death in camp, the cities of his realm had in common the care of his funeral rites, but afterwards contended for his ashes, finally agreeing to divide his remains equally amongst them so that monuments to him should be raised among them all. This is certainly reminiscent of the story of the distribution of the Buddha's ashes (cf. James Prinsep *Essays on Indian Antiquities* ed. E. Thomas, Vol. I, London, 1858, pp. 49-50, 171). Reference may in this connection also be made to the "wheel" symbol appearing on some of Menander's coins which may have represented the Buddhist *dharmachakra* (A. N. Lahiri *Corpus of Indo-Greek Coins* Calcutta, 1965, p. 159, Plate XXVI, 7). The Shinkot Steatite Casket Inscriptions throw welcome light on the spread and patronage of Buddhism in Menander's territory (cf., *Ep. Ind.* Vol. XXIV p. 7).—*Translator.*

5. Secular literature in Sanskrit is later found to develop in analogous circumstances (cf. Sylvain Lévi *Sur quelques termes employeé's dans les inscriptions des Kshatrapa* J. A. 1902),

6. It has been assumed by one group of scholars that the founder of the Yogāchāra School of Mahāyāna Buddhism was Āsaṅga to whom according to tradition, many of his works had been revealed by the future Buddha Maitreya in the Tushita heaven. Discovery of fresh evidence however has now enabled many to postulate the existence of Maitreya or Maitreyanātha as an historical personage who is supposed to have been a human teacher of Āsaṅga and the real founder of the Yogāchāra School (cf. H. Ui 'Maitreya as an Histori-Personage' in *Indian Studies in Honor of C. R. Lanman* Harvard University Press 1929 pp. 95-101 ; G. Tucci *On some Aspects of the Doctrines of Maitreyanātha and Āsaṅga* Calcutta, 1930, pp. 6-17 ; E. J. Thomas *History of Buddhist Thought* Second Ed. London, 1951, p. 232) The 'six works' attributed to Maitreya by Ui and

Tucci, are the *Yogācharābhūmiśāstra*, the *Yogavibhaṅga-śāstra*, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, the *Madhyāntavi-bhaṅga*, the *Vajrachhedika-Pāramitā-śāstra* and the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*. According to the Tibetan tradition Maitreya is the author of the *five* following texts: *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, *Madhyāntavibhaṅga*, *Dharmadharmatāvi-bhaṅga*, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and *Uttaratantra* (E. Obermiller in *Acta Orientalia* Vol. IX, 1931, pp. 81—306.). Sylvain Lévi however in the introduction to his French translation of the *Mahāyānasūtralaṃkāra* Paris, 1911, pp. 7-8, ascribes the *kārikās* as well as the commentary of the text to Āsaṅga. He is followed by Mm. Vidhu-sekhara Bhattacharya (cf. his edition of the *Yogāchāra-bhūmi* Part I Calcutta 1957, Introduction p. 7). Maitreya as an historical person is placed by Mm. Haraprasad Śāstrī between 150 and 265 A. D. (*Ind. Hist. Quarterly* 1925, pp. 465 ff.) —*Translator.*

7. For example, the *Sūtra pronounced by the Buddha before entering into Nirvāṇa dealing with the duration of the Law* (Nanijo 123; Tokyo, XIII, 10 pp. 114b—16a) and the *Sūtra of the Parinirvāṇa of the mother of the Buddha* (Nanijo 651; *Tripiṭaka* Tokyo, XII, 4, p. 40).

8. The belief that the Law would be destroyed at the end of a period of five centuries, seems to be at the basis of various well-developed chronological systems in which the duration of Dharma has been fixed at many times five hundred years. Thus in the *Chullavagga* (X.1.6) it is found to be 5000 years (i. e. 500 × 10). In the Chinese translation of the *Mahāsanni-pātasūtra* (Nanijo 61) the successive periods that mark the decadence of the Law are each of five hundred years (cf. *Vajrachchhedikā* trans. Max Muller, S. B. E. XLIX p. 115, note 3).

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST CHAPTER OF THE A-YU-WANG-CHUAN

The last chapter of the A. W. Ch. has no equivalent in any other recension of the *Aśokāvadāna.* It is a collection of stories quite dissimilar to one another, which however have the common trait of being, on all occasions related to Aśoka. The chapter is entitled, "Avadāna of the present given by Aśoka" because the subject of the first narrative is a present made by Aśoka to one of his concubines. I shall start with a resumé of the accounts while pointing in each case to an analogous narrative forming part of other collections.

1. Aśoka promises a jewel called *chintāmaṇi* to the one among his wives who would have the best attire. Sujātā dresses herself simply and appears in a decent and contemplative attitude. The king gives her the jewel.

The 72nd story of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* rests on an analogous theme : *Ou-yue-ki* king of Aśmaka sends a necklace of pearls to a woman who had gazed on the Buddha through a window. "It is not her dazzling beauty that impresses me", he says, "it is only her good action". (trans. Huber p. 422).

2. Among the invitees of Aśoka there happens one day, to be a monk whose breath has the perfume of the lotus flower. He explains to the astonished monarch that he has been thus rewarded because of having eulogised the Law in the days of Buddha Kāśyapa.

This theme must have been a popular one, for it has been utilised many times. We come across it again in the *Avadāna-śataka* (*Sugandhi* 62), the *Kalpadrumāvadāna* (16), the Pāli *Apadāna* (*Sugandha* and *Chula-Sugandha* IV, 10,—see Feer *Avadānaśataka* p. 240), the *Śūtrālaṃkāra* (55), the *Karmaśataka* (X, 1, 10 analysed by Feer in the J. A. 1901, I p, 76) and the *Chung-king-siuen-tsa-pi-luen* (Tokyo XIX, 7, 17a). According to the versions found in the first three collections Sugandhi is not a contemporary of Aśoka but of Buddha Śākyamuni. Of all

these parallel accounts, that of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* makes the nearest approach to the A. W. Ch.

3. Inspite of king Aśoka's prohibition one of the queens approaches a Master of the Law and listens to his preaching. She confesses her fault before the king who pardons her and permits the women of the harem to go to the monks.

The same story is recounted in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (30). The basis of the story is here the same, but Aśvaghosha has developed and embellished it a great deal which is not found in the A. W. Ch.

4. Aśoka prostrates himself before a *śrāmaṇera* aged seven years, but he is ashamed of his action. The child gives him a lesson.

The same subject is treated in detail in the third story of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*.. In the narrative of Aśvaghosha however, it is not Aśoka, but another *dānapati* who slights the *śrmaṇeras*. According to the A. W. Ch. there are three types of beings who should not be despised even when young, viz., the śrāmaṇera, the son of a king, and the serpent. Aśvaghosha adds a fourth one to the list, viz , fire.

5. A brāhmaṇa transforms himself into a *mahoraga* and followed by four hundred and ninety-nine of his companions enters the palace of Aśoka. The king offers them food but they do not wish for any other nourishment than the flesh of *Śramaṇas*. The Sthavira Yaśas is informed and he summons the monks of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery. The youngest of the lot, a śrāmaṇera of seven years, obtains permission to go to the palace. Arriving before the king, he declares his willingness to be devoured but demands that prior to this, he be served with a last meal. Then he eats up the whole amount of food from the kitchens and all the provisions of the store-rooms. Then he successively devours the four hundred and ninety-nine brāhmaṇas and their chief. After this pantagruelian feast, the etables reappear in the Kukkuṭārāma monastery along with the ashamed and repentant brāhmaṇas.

This story is reproduced in the *Tsa-pi-yu-king* (Tokyo XIX, 7, p. 29a) with this difference that the foodstuff finds its way not into the Kukkuṭrārāma but into the Jetavana monastery.

6. The ministers of Aśoka blame him for prostrating himself before the monks. He orders each of them to procure the head of a dead animal and to go and sell it in the market. Yaśas, who is charged to go and sell the head of a dead man, cannot find a purchaser. Aśoka proves by this means that our body is a worthless object and we should not hesitate to subject it to humiliation.

This is the theme of the sixteenth story of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*. The account of Aśvaghosha has been incorporated in a slightly abridged form, into the *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell & Neil, pp. 382-84 ; cf. also Huber B. E. F. E. O. IV, pp. 719 ff.).

7. A female servant comes upon a piece of bronze amidst filth and dirt and makes a gift of it to the saṃgha. As a reward for this good action she is conceived in the womb of one of Aśoka's concubines and is reborn with a piece of gold in hand.

In the eighty-third narrative of the *Avadānaśataka*, Hiraṇyapāṇi is described as born in the time of Śākyamuni, carrying two pieces of gold in his two hands, for having formerly deposed two pieces of gold on a stūpa of Buddha Kāśyapa. The same theme recurs in the twentieth story of the *Ratnāvadānāmālā* (cf. Feer *Avadānaśataka*, p. 317). In the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (22) the case is, as in the A. W. Ch. that of a servant girl who donates two pieces of bronze picked up from filth, but she obtains her reward during her life-time. A king who is not named, sees her, loves her, and marries her

8. Aśoka possesses amongst his treasures the jewel *chintāmaṇi* which had originally belonged to king Ajātaśatru. Discovering the marvellous qualities of this stone the king persuades himself to believe that men in the days of the Buddha had great merits.

Later the *History* of Tāranātha is found to contain an analogous story.

9. Aśoka receives the Venerable Piṇḍola in his palace. The latter drinks a large quantity of fermented milk without being in any way indisposed. He explains to the king that in the days of the Buddha pure water was as strong as the heady liquors of to-day.

10. On the advice of Sthavira Yaśas, Aśoka institutes a search. An old woman who has nothing but a piece of cotton cloth covering her, gives it to the king while hiding her nudity from him.

The same story is related in the *Avadānaśataka* (*Vastraṃ* 55), in the *Dvāviṃśatyāvadana* and the *Ratnāvadānamālā* (cf. Feer *Avadānasataka* pp. 216-17), and in the *Tsa-pao-tsang-king*. Nevertheless in all these accounts the quest is made not by king Aśoka, but by Anāthapiṇḍika.

11. Aśoka's quest continues. He proceeds to all places to collect offerings for the Saṃgha. Two poor couples being unable otherwise to make any gift, borrow a sum of money and pledge their own persons as securities.

The same theme reappears in a considerably developed form in the 76th story of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* but without the slightest allusion to king Aśoka or to the quest launched by him.

12. Aśoka desired to collect the relics that king Ajātaśatru had deposited in the Ganges. Passage to them was guarded by a wheel equipped with swords and turned by the current. The wheel could be successfully immobilised but that did not enable one to obtain the relics which were being guarded by a great *nāgarāja*. The king cast two statues of gold, of equal dimension representing himself and the *nāga*. These were weighd and it was found that the statue of the *nāgarāja* was twice as heavy as that of Aśoka. Since then the king endeavoured to acquire merits; consequently the weight of his statue increased and when it became the heaviest, he went with his troops to the bank of the Ganges and could now get hold of the relics.

The same legend is narrated in the *Tsa-pi-yu-king* (Tokyo XIX, 7. p. 297), the *T'ien-tsuen-chuo-A-yu-wang-pi-yu-king* (Tokyo XXIV, 8 p. 65a), the *Avadānakalpalata* (no. 73) and the *History* of Tāranatha (see *infra* p. 200).

We see thus, that the majority of stories narrated in the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. is found also in other collections such as the *Avadānaśataka*, the *Avadānakalpalatā*, the *Ta-pi-yu-king*, etc., and above all in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*.. Nevertheless, it is difficult to affirm that in each case the complier of the A. W. Ch, has borrowed directly from one of the aforesaid

collections. The subjects of the stories are the same, but there is palpable difference in details and form. The final chapter of the A. W. Ch. seems independent of all the literary works actually known to us.

The difference is found to be particularly acute when the sober tales of the A. W. Ch. are compared with the flowery *avadānas* of Aśvaghosha. While the latter richly embellishes the text of the stories, the complier of the A. W. Ch. gives only the bare facts ; the application of *alaṃkāra* is absolutely unknown to him. In this respect, remarkable contrast is to be marked between the "story of the head of the dead" inserted in the concluding chapter of the A. W. Ch. (no. 6) and the version of the same in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (no. 16) the original of which has passed into the *Divyāvadāna*. In the former case we have the bare account without any poetic flourish ; in the latter the talent of the writer can obviously be recognised. If the compilation of the A. W. Ch. had been posterior to the redaction of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, one would certainly have discerned the influence of *Aśvaghosha* in it, as in the *Divyāvadāna*. Great writers have always had the the privilege of being imitated. Since the style of Aśvaghosha does not reveal itself in any of the stories the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. possesses in common with the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, I am inclined to think that the former is anterior to the latter.

The facts can now be arranged in the following manner. The Kashmirian epoch is characterised by the abundance of new texts that reproduce, adapt, develop and comment on ancient elements (see *supra* p. 14). Afterwards appear the numerous collections of stories such as the *Avadānaśataka* the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* etc the authors of which adapted old themes while disguising them a little in order to give them an air of novelty. The last chapter of the A. W. Ch. is a compliation of this kind. A writer drawing inspiration from earlier literature and possibly also from popular tradition, had made a selection of different stories some of which had already come to form part of the cycle of Aśokan legends. The rest of the tales could probably be referred to the same epoch. The collection thus formed had been added to the *Aśokāvadāna*.

A careful examination of the subject-matter of the stories

also enables one to see that things had taken shape in the aforesaid manner. Analysis reveals in effect, elements belonging to different ages and regions in the final chapter of the A.W.Ch. the more recent ones of which could not have been anterior to the Kashmirian period.

We have noticed previouslv the metamorphosis of Yaśas ; figured originally as a monk in a monastery situated in the Vṛiji country, he appears next in the *Aśokāvadāna* as the spiritual counsellor of Aśoka in his capacity as the abbot of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery ; while in the works of the Kashmirian School the same name stands ultimately for an impious and malevolent minister. In the fifth and tenth narratives of the final chapter of the A.W.Ch. Yaśas appears as the Sthavira of the Kukkuṭārāma monastery as also the conscience-keeper of Aśoka. In story no. 6 he plays the role of the great unbelieving official. These three stories cannot possibly have pertained to a coherent and harmonious body of legends. The first two still attribute to Yaśas the title that he is found to bear during the Mathurā period while the third gives a Kashmirian version of the same character.

We have similarly distinguished a number of phases in the evolution of the traditions relating to Piṇḍola. In the oldest narratives belonging definitely to the Magadhan period, the culpability of this monk appears to be flagrant and indisputable. As a contrast, in the *Vinaya* his fault is perceptibly attenuated. In the majority of recensions of the *Aśokāvadāna* there will be found merely a discreet allusion to it ; the A.W.Ch. even passes it over in silence. One proceeds thus by degrees towards a final stage marked by the complete rehabilitation of Piṇḍola. There is no doubt that this is the conclusion aimed at by the author of story no. 9 of the A.W.Ch. The set purpose of condoning the faults of Piṇḍola is clearly manifest here. What subtlities have been resorted to for reestablishing the reputation of this saint ! His intemperance is only apparent ! It is due solely to the fact that everything has necessarily degenerated since the days of the Buddha. The fermented beverage of to-day has not more of savour than the water of the good old days. Piṇḍola who had retained the robust constitution of the men of yore, can thus drink

strong liquor just as an ordinary person would drink pure water.

The importance attributted to the personality of the *śramaṇera* in the last chapter of the A.W.Ch is also a feature denoting a late redaction. In the *Aśokāvadāna* Aśoka is seen receiving the monks in his palace after offering is made to the Bodhi Tree. Finding two śrāmaṇeras exchanging food and sweets he says to himself laughing : "There are the *śrāmaṇeras* who are playing a child's game". But he is soon undeceived by Sthavira Yaśas who says to him : "These are two arhats who give up their share with equal detachment". A little later the two *śramaṇeras* having read the secret thoughts of the king, the latter prostrates himself before them and speaks to them with respect (Burnouf *Introduction* pp. 401-03).

This little episode destined to prove the saintliness of monks, however young, is only a digression. But in some later redactions the *śrāmaṇera* comes to the forefront of the legend. In the *History* of Tāranātha the bhikshu Samudra is replaced by a novice who converts the king as well as the latter's cruel jailer. Seized by remorse, Aśoka afterwards destroys the infernal prison.

In the *Dīpavaṃsa* which is certainly the earliest of the chronicles of Ceylon Aśoka is found to be converted by *samana* Nigrodha (*Dīpavaṃsa* VI, 34). In the later text *Mahāvaṃsa* Nigrodha is no longer a *samana*, but a young *samaṇera* (*Mahavaṃsa*, V, 37)[1].

The same process of evolution may be traced in stories no. 4 and no. 5 of the last chapter of the A W.Ch In the first of these narratives the king learns not to slight the very young *śrāmaṇeras*. In the next story, however, the importance of the *śrāmaṇera* is much accentuated. The account undoubtedly begins from before the conversion of Aśoka since the king receives in his palace Brāhmaṇas who are the enemies of the Buddha and offers them food to eat. It concludes with the victory of a *śrāmaṇera* of seven years, who devours all his adversaries. The king then says to the infant ; "Oh *Āchārya*, if you could make me fly in the sky or enter the nether region I would follow you everywhere !" These words enable us to realise that in the legend from which the episode

is drawn, the conversion of the king must have been represented as the work of a *śramaṇera*. Its equivalent is to be met with only in later texts like the *Mahāvaṃsa* or the *History* of Tāranātha. In the earlier *Aśokāvadāna* and even in the *Kuṇālasūtra* belonging to the Kashmirian period, Aśoka is found to be converted by a monk of ripe age. The author of the last chapter of the A.W.Ch. happens therefore to reflect traditions that have undergone a much longer process of development.

It seems certain that he has borrowed at least two of his narratives (stories no. 5 and no. 12) from the Chronicle of Aśoka from which both Kṣhemendra and Tāranātha draw their inspiration. The latter relates that the nāgas having robbed the merchants of a cargo load of precious stones, were ordered by Aśoka to restore those jewels. The order of the king was inscribed on a copper plate which was thrown into the Ganges. At the same time two statues of gold representing the king and a *nāga* were placed on an elevated ground. Soon a hurricane rose. The plate of copper was hurled before the gate of the palace and the image of Aśoka was turned upside down. The king, realising that his merits were insufficient, resolved to acquire them anew. He received 60,000 Arhats in his palace. Then the *nāgas* recognised his power and restored the precious stones (*History* of Tāranātha p. 31).

Later, with the intention of procuring the relics of the Buddha that had been collected by king Ajātaśatru, Aśoka is said to have excavated the earth. The diggers were frightened when confronted with an iron wheel which emitted flames as it turned. The water of a river was poured into the hole and as a result e wheel stopped and the fire went out. Digging was resumed and it ended with the discovery of an iron case containing a large quantity of relics as well as numerous gems, so precious that all the treasures of the king could not equal even a single of the jewels in value*. Aśoka took a large number of relics, closed the iron coffin and put back the iron wheel in its place (*History* of Tāranātha p. 34).

We can distinguish the following themes in the two above episodes :

(a) use of two golden statues for a comparison of the respective powers of the king and the *nāgas* ;

(b) the king, whose merits increase, ultimately triumphs over the *nāgas* ;

(c) the wheel of iron that guards the road to the relics ;

(d) the marvellous jewels of Ajātaśatru ;

(e) the king gets hold of the relics.

These five themes are fully represented in the last chapter of the A.W.Ch., but not in the same order as in the chronicle of Tāranātha. In the A.W.Ch. *a, b*, c and *e* are grouped in a single *avadāna* viz. the twelvth of the series ; theme *d*. developed apart, forms story no. 5. In Tāranātha, *a* and *b* constitute the *avadāna* of the *Submission of the Nāgas* ; *c, d*, and *e* are combined in another episode entitled *Chaityāvadāna*.

From the above analysis it emerges that the last chapter of the A.W.Ch. is a collection of stories formed of diverse materials. Many narratives from various points of view, show scarcely any advance on the ancient sections of the *Aśokāvadāna* ; others are on a level with the productions of the Kashmirian School. This leads me to the conclusion that the redaction of this small anthology could not have been earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. It would thus appear to be later than the prophesy contained in the A.W.Ch. regarding the destruction of the Law and almost certainly than the *Aśokāvadāna* itself.

What object then had the author in view ? Did he want simply to complete the Aśoka-Saga by adding to it a series of tales collected indiscriminately out of other texts, or else, did he really wish to impress his readers with some of his own convictions and ideas through them ? Was he actually playing the role of the scholar, or that of the philosopher ? Does he offer, in all fairness, the results of his researches, or does the selection of the pieces, on the contrary, enable us to catch a partial glimpse of the personality of the compiler and the tendencies of his age ? These problems do not perhaps admit of definite solutions. Nevertheless, we must try to throw some light on them.

At the end of the 74th tale of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, the

Sthavira is seen preaching the Law after a feast offered to the community of monks by a brāhmaṇa of Mathurā. His exposition has bearing on the *Śāstra* of Alms-giving, the principle of the Prohibitions and the *Śāstra* of Birth in Heaven. M. Sylvain Lévi has shown that the same series appears several times in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*. Thus on p. 45 we read : "Just because they (the ṛishis) practise alms-giving, abide by the prohibitions and speak the truth, they would be reborn in heaven".—Again on p. 130, "The giving of alms and the curbing of the senses are the roads that lead to heaven". The same thing reappears on p 439 : "The observance of the prohibitions, alms-giving and a mind kept well under control,—are the things that lead to birth in heaven". (Sylvain Lévi *Aśvaghoṣha* p. 179).

The third story of the last chapter of the A. W Ch. has precisely these interesting doctrines for its theme : "When the Masters of the Law explain the Law for women, they usually discuss the *śāstra* dealing with the giving of alms, the *śastra* of the prohibitions (*śīlas*) and the *śastra* dealing with the topic of birth in heaven". The rest of the story shows that these three texts constitute a sort of catechism on the usage of the laity, specially of women. Those who wished afterwards to complete their instruction, had to study other works, specially the Sūtra of the Four Truths ; they attained thereby honours that mark out the path of ascent from the stage of *Śrotapatti* to that of *Arhat*. Those who abided by the three elementary texts enumerated above, became *upāsakas* or *upāsikas*. They were acquainted with the duties of pious laymen consisting of the practice of alms-giving and the observation of the five *śīlas* ; their recompense was not *nirvaṇa* but rebirth among the gods.

Outside fable literature, the above doctrine is attested in the canonical texts. In the *sūtra* relating to the conversion of Śrīgupta occurring in the *Ekottarāgama* the Lord is said to have "recited the *śastra* for Śrīgupta as well as for eighty-four thousand creatures. It is the śāstra of Charity, Prohibitions and Birth in heaven." (Sylvain Lévi *Aśvaghosha* p. 179). The *P'i-ni-mu-luen* cites the *Śāstra* of alms-giving, the *Śastra* of the *Śīlas*, the *Śastra* of Rebirth in heaven and the *Śastra* of *Nirvaṇa* (Tok. XVII, 9. p. 27b, col. 6). The *Sarvāstivādavinayavibhāṣā*

enumerates in the same order,—instructions on alms-giving, prohibitions and birth in heaven,—while dealing with the rule forbidding monks to demand clothes from an *upāsaka* belonging to a distant village (Tok. XVII, 7, p. 25a, col. 20). The *Abhidharmāmṛitaśāstra* written by bhadanta Ghosha, which was translated into Chinese between A.D. 220 and A.D. 265, discusses in its first *varga* the themes of charity and observation of the *śīlas* . After having defined these two terms, the author does not fail to point to birth in heaven among the rewards reserved for virtuous people (Tok. XXIV, 1, pp 1b, 2a).

Of the different texts cited by us so far, those, the dates of which can be fixed approximately, appear to have belonged to the same epoch. The *Sūtrālaṃkāra* and the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. were probably composed during the Kashmirian period. I have shown elsewhere that the *Ekottarāgama* must have been composed in one of the regions of northern India when Buddhism had been already flourishing there (*Le Parinirvāṇa et le funerailles du Buddha* J. A. 1918, II. pp 435-56). This brings us once more to the Kashmirian period. As for bhadanta Ghosa, the author of the *Abhidharmāmṛitaśāstra*, the place he occupies in the lists of savants of the Sarvāstivādin School, proves that he lived during a time not much distant from that of Aśhvaghosha (Lévi *Aśvaghosha*, p. 123). Finally, tradition affirms that the Arhats of the Third Council held in the reign of Kanishka[*], composed the *Vibhāṣā* of the *Vinaya*. As Watters has justly observed there is absolutely no proof that the Chinese translation of the *Sarvāstivādavinaya-vibhāṣā* corresponds exactly to the work produced by the Third Council (*On Yuan Chuang's Travels in India* I p. 276). Nevertheless, this is the only version of the *Vinayavibhāṣā* actually known to us. Its title and the fact that it is attributed to the Sarvāstivādin School, tend to connect it with the work of the Third Council of which it is possibly a summary.

It may be inferred from this chronological concordance that the three *śastras* of Charity, Prohibitions and Birth in heaven were continuously in use during the Kashmirian period. Unfortunately we cannot flatter ourselves that we have been able to obtain their exact text. It exists certainly in the

Chinese collections and in the Tibetan *Kan-gyur* there are also different texts corresponding probably to one or other of the three, for example, the *Fo-chuo-pu-che-king* (Nanijo 810) and the *Fo-chuo-fen-pie-pu-che-king* (Nanijo 930) both of which treat the subject of Alms-giving, the *Fo-chuo-yeu-p'o-sai ou-kiai-siang-king* (Nanijo 1114) regarding the five observances of the *upāsakas*, the *Draṅ-sroṅ-rgyas-pas-zus-pa* on "the nature of different kinds of Charity and Alms-giving," (Feer *Catalogue du Kandjour*, p. 218), the *Lha'i-mdo-ñuṅ-ṅu* on the acts that enable one to gain heaven (Feer *Ibid* p. 281, no. 27), etc. But nowhere do we find in full the series of the three *śāstras* that the canonical and literary texts agree in mentioning in a constant order. Of course, from the fact that the series appears incomplete in all the above collections, we must not rush to the conclusion that this triad was only of secondary importance. Everything on the contrary strengthens the belief that the systematisation of the teachings imparted to the laity is a fact of great significance in the evolution of Buddhism.

In the famous Bhabru edict Aśoka had requested the Magadhan clergy[4] to propagate the teaching of a certain number of sacred texts. He adds: "These religious texts I desire that large congregation of bhikshus and bhikshuṇīs should frequently cultivate and meditate upon; the lay devotees of both sexes should do the same" (Senart *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi* II p. 208). Thus, at this stage there is no question of any precept reserved specially for the laity; the same texts are studied by the monks and nuns as well as by the *upāsakas* and the *upāsikās*. This doctrinal unity is easily explained if one takes into account the general characteristics of primitive Buddhism. "In my opinion," says Senart, speaking of the Aśokan inscriptions, "Our records bear witness to a state of Buddhism which is considerably different from what it became later; it appears to us here as a doctrine primarily moral, only secondarily preoccupied with particular dogmas and abstract theories little embarrassed with scholastic and monastic elements, scarcely inclined to emphasise the divergences that ultimately separated it from the neighbouring faiths .. ..As far as it is possible for us to judge, the character

of the few fragments enumerated by Piyadasi in the Bhabru edict, is in complete agreement with such a state of Buddhism. Yet another point is of importance : nowhere in course of description of the prospective rewards of virtue does Piyadasi make any allusion to *nirvāṇa* ; he speaks always of *svarga* (cf. edicts VI, IX, etc.) ; of course, the king may have deliberately chosen a term familiar to all persons and universal to all the faiths ; nevertheless this absolute silence appears to me significant ; it clearly points to an epoch prior to the metaphysical and speculative developments of Buddhism" (Senart *Ibid* II, p. 322). Thus during the Magadhan period the simplicity of the doctrine and its moral and truly human character had rendered it accessible to all. The clergy as well as the laity could fathom its meaning without having to go through a period of laborious study. All the devotees, appear to have pursued the same object, viz. happiness in the other world. There was therefore, no fixed line of demarcation between different categories of the faithful ; the same doctrine appealed to all.

Later in course of its infiltration among the Brāhmaṇas of the Madhyadeśa the doctrine became saddled with scholastic elements as a result of its contact with the esoteric theories of the Upanishads ; its zealots got the taste of philosophical speculations and abstractions. This change resulted naturally in an increase in the influence of theologians as well as in giving the Church a more aristocratic constitution. I have already shown how the theologians had been responsible for the propagation of a new ideal. In the ancient texts Ānanda is represented as the perfect type of śramaṇa ; tender, devoted, pitiful, he is a personage whom we find profoundly human. Soon however one came to think of a virtue more sublime and more wonderful ; a state of absolute perfection was imagined characterised by the possession of magical powers and supernatural knowledge (*abhijña*). Anuruddha was one of the model Arhats, the serene, impeccable and omniscient Saint (cf. *Le Parinirvāṇa et les Funerailles du Buddha* J. A., 1918, II pp. 445-47). The Arhat is in possession of supernatural qualities that raise him high above the common level of humanity ; he belongs to the category of the *yogin* or

the ṛishi; he is in fact the brāhmanical ascetic transplanted in Buddhist surroundings.

This transcendental conception of the Saint was associated with a new theory of the beyond. During the Magadhan period, the other world was considered in some way a prolongation of earthly life (cf. *supra* pp. 154-55) Like earthly sovereigns, the king of the dead receives the pure souls in his palace and casts the sinners into prison. In heaven as in hell life continues to be better or worse as in our world. It is not specifically different from human life. Later during the Kauśāmbī and the Mathurā periods the pessimistic outlook of the philosophers influenced and transformed Buddhism. Life is now considered evil in all its forms. The *Arhat* aspires after *nirvāṇa*. Total and positive extinction becomes the privilege of the Saint[6].

The Arhat, like the *yogin*, reaches emancipation only by submitting himself to a discipline,—I would say,—by submitting willingly to an impulse. Since the growth of this concept attainment of salvation came to be considered an impossibility outside monastic life. The monk is nearer his emancipation than the lay-worshipper, the Arhat, than the *anāgamin* or the *śrotāpanna* We are thus led to subdivide the Church into a number of hierarchical groups almost on the model of Brahmanical society.

Thus, contrary to what it had still remained in the time of Aśoka, Buddhism assumed during the Kauśāmbī and the Mathurā phases the same form as for example, is to be marked in the majority of works belonging to the Pāli Canon, viz., an abstract and scholastic doctrine subordinating the whole universe to the Arhat who is himself solely preoccupied with the idea of *Nirvāṇa*. The primitive Church has now been transformed by monachism. Religion is no longer destined to place certain simple moral truths within the reach of everybody; from now on it simply offers a superhuman ideal to a chosen few.

The supreme goal of the doctrine is now to produce *arhats* and to lead to *nirvāṇa*. The lay devotees, even the *śrotāpannas* themselves, are regarded as voyagers tossed about in the ocean of transmigration; only the Arhat has touched

the shore. One must not therefore expect to find the theologians formulating a doctrine the avowed object of which would be rebirth among gods and the consequent prolongation of the journey through *saṃsāra*. It was certainly permissible to preach during the Kauśāmbī and Mathurā phases that rebirth in heaven was the result of previously acquired merits; this was strictly in conformation to the doctrine of *karman*. But to enligtened people, this recompense in itself must have appeared too imperfect and insufficient to be sought after. The perusal of the texts moreover, confirms these deductions.

The A. W. K. and the A. W. Ch. contain each a chapter recounting the large number of conversions performed by Upagupta. This chapter must have originally belonged to the *Aśokāvadāna* since it is common to the two principal recensions of it. All the stories occurring in it, are found to conclude in the same manner: the personage who receives instruction from Upagupta invariably attains the status of Arhat. It is quite clear that according to the author of the *Aśokāvadāna*, the function of the patriarch was to produce Arhats, i. e. to liberate people from the shackle of successive rebirths. It had been considered unworthy of a great saint to convert lay-worshippers destined to be reborn in heaven.

Let us now pass on to the scriptures of the Sthaviras, the rivals of the Sarvāstivādin School. We have seen that all the stories relating to the reign of Aśoka contained in the Ceylonese annals are not of the same age. Some of them refer probably to the time when the Sthaviras were laying the foundation of their earliest establishments in the region between Kauśāmbī and Ujjayinī; others, which are later, form part of the legendary accounts of Ceylon herself, and are accordingly posterior to the evangelisation of the great island (cf. *supra* p. 117). The narrative concerning the sending of missionaries for the propagation of the Law in all the lands, undoubtedly belongs to the first group. This tradition is certainly ancient since it is confirmed at least partly by the Aśokan inscriptions themselves. Among the suttas preached by the royal envoys we may note in the first place the *Devadūtasutta* (*Mahāvaṃsa* XII. 29). The preaching is addressed to lay people not yet converted; and yet it does not mention any

of the three *śāsras* of Alms-giving, Prohibitions and Rebirth in heaven.

The account of the conversion of the Ceylonese king and his subjects by Mahinda (Mahendra) is probably later ; it forms part of the legends which can be described as properly Singhalese. The brother of Aśoka is the legendary apostle of Ceylon just as Dharmavivardhana is the apostle of Kashmir in the *Kuṇālasūtra*. The prince-missionary converted queen Anulā and her female companions by reciting to them the *Petavatthu*, the *Vimānavatthu* and the *Sachchasaṃyutta* (*Dīpavaṃsa* XII, 84). Elsewhere he is found to preach the *Devadūtasutta*, the *Bālapaṇḍitasutta*[6] etc. (*Dīpavamsa* XIII, 8, 13). In all these circumstances he never refers to the three *śāstras* which appear to be so familiar to the authors of the Kashmirian School. Mahendra addresses himself first to the women. It is obvious that he ignores the rule cited by the author of the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. according to which the Masters of the Law are to explain to women the *śāstras* of Almsgiving, Prohibitions and Rebirth in heaven.

The Kashmirian period appears to have been marked by a reaction against monachism and the aristocratic constitution of the Church. At the same time the doctrine came to be humanised ; the religious ideal was rendered more accessible ; as against the concept of *nirvāṇa* rebirth in heaven became, as before, the desired goal of the pious ; in opposition to the theory of Arhatship there arose a new conception of Sainthood. The new tendencies already find expression in the different works of the Kashmirian School. They were to attain their full development in the literature of Mahāyāna. The desire to be reborn in heaven was to help to a large extent the spread of the belief in the Paradise of Amitābha as well as in the second form of the cult of Maitreya, "that which holds up birth in the Tushita heaven as the ultimate goal" (Peri, according to Matsumoto B. E. F. E. O. XI, p. 447). The speculations on the role of the saint was to result ultimately in the creation of the Bodhisattva-type. "The Lesser Vehicle (*Hīnayāna*) had postulated an ideal of monastic life which aimed exclusively at salvation for the individual ; the Arhat is a candidate for Nirvāṇa and is impatient to attain it.

Nirvāṇa therefore, as a necessary consequence, perpetuates the dignity of the Arhat. As against the Arhat of the Lesser Vehicle, the Greater Vehicle sets up the Bodhisattva ; far from eschewing the world, the saint according to the new creed, returns to it deliberately and continues to act, without however any personal preoccupation, with the sole aim of securing the salvation of all living beings. The saintliness that had guided the Arhat to annihilate the cycle of existences directly for himself, leads the Bodhisattva on the contrary to the above position by his free assent. The Law which was threatened with destruction by the multiplication of Arhats in the Lesser Vehicle, now finds its preservation assured by a similar process of multiplication of Bodhisattvas in the Greater Vehicle' (*Les Seize Arhat......*pp. 131-32).

This evolution appears to have been due to political and social causes the effect of which had begun to make itself felt since the beginning of the Kashmirian epoch. The narratives of the time of the invasions and the prophesy relating to the destruction of the Law, are the productions of a decadent phase. The manner of philosophical discussion leads to controversies which do not add to the prestige of the contending scholars. The subtlities of the theologians and the casuistry of the Vinaya experts have equally inflated the Canon as intelligence comprehensive enough to master the entire body of the doctrine has come to be increasingly rare. In quitting the ground of ethical practice on which its founders had placed it in order to raise itself to the level of misty metaphysics, Buddhism had lost all contact with reality. But the shock of the invasions at last obliged the monks to wake up from their day-dream. As a result of association with arrogant and pertinacious Brāhmaṇas they had turned pedants and dialecticians. Under the domination of the conquering barbarians they came to be more simple and humane. In a society as cosmopolitan as the one under the Kushan empire where foreigners were making laws, the prejudices of race which formed the basis of Brāhmanical arrogance must have disappeared. In the circumstances religious sentiment necessarily became tender and broad-based. Purged definitely of all sectarian elements, Buddhism was now transformed into a universal religion.

The prevailing doctrine of the epoch is that, saintliness is not the privilege of an elite that must necessarily die out after a few generations. In view of the unlimited prospect of expansion lying open before them in Central Asia the Buddhists were convinced that their faith must shine eternally throughout the whole of the universe. The Law of Buddha Śākyamuni could disappear momentarily after some centuries; but other Buddhas would appear. Maitreya himself shall be followed by other Saviours during these aeons which are so very long as to make one's head dizzy to contemplate. It is for men of good will to pave the way for the future Buddhas.

Before the magnitude of the great task to be performed, the old conception of the Arhat always eager to come to the end of his spiritual journey and attain Nirvāṇa, appeared rather paltry. The desire for apostleship arising out of an unlimited compassion,—induced the zealots of the Law to go on living in the world and to be reborn for the welfare of future generations. Since then Piṇḍola was entirely marked out from among the first batch of teachers, for the task of giving a concrete expression to the new ideal. During the previous period his exclusion from *Parinirvāṇa* had been regarded as the result of a punishment; this appears to be quite clear from the Vinaya accounts and from the narratives contained in the three recensions of the *Aśokavadāna.* Henceforth however, no longer any need is felt to invent the story of a punishment to explain his survival. His mission as Protector of the Law sufficiently justifies the prolongation of his earthly existence. And so one notices the complete disappearance of any allusion to Piṇḍola's punishment in the majority of productions of the Kashmirian School (cf. *supra* p. 195 and *infra* pp. 215-16).

So long as the devotees desired a prompt attainment of *Parinirvāṇa* the superiority of the Arhat appeared obvious. As soon however as it began to seem preferable to stay on in the world in order to help other creatures to secure salvation, the entire scale of values became reversed. The ancient hierarchy of the laity and of the four grades of monks lost its importance a great deal. The same individual, monk or layman, could without at all being an Arhat, be reborn among the gods and

ultimately become a Buddha or a companion of Maitreya. Out of this arose a concern among the writers of the Kashmirian School to glorify the humble and the novice, women and virtuous laymen, occasionally at the expense of śramaṇas. The transformation of the religious ideal finds expression through the simultaneous humiliation of the Arhat and the exaltation of other categories of the faithful.

The accounts of the Third Council[7] assembled by Kanishka are found to convey these new principles. According to Hiuen Tsang the 499 Arhats who formed the assembly, had refused at first to admit Vasumitra because he had not still attained emancipation. The latter however declared that he cared very little to acquire the benefits of Arhatship ; his aim was to become a Buddha. A moment later the gods are found to predict that his wish shall be fulfilled and he shall be a successor to Maitreya (*Mémoires* trans. Julien I pp. 176-77 ; Watters *On Yuan Chuang* I p. 271). In the *History* of Tāranātha the account of the Council, although much compressed, is equally illuminating. The Tibetan chronicler discusses diverse views according to which the assembly had been composed of 500 *Arhats*, 500 *Bodhisattvas* and 500 ordinary *panditas* ; or else, of 500 *Arhats* and 5000 *Mahābhadantas* ; or again, of Vasumitra and 400 *Bhadantas*. The main point is that in all these cases the assembly is not found to be composed only of Arhats ; contrary to what had happened in the two earlier Councils, it has now come to consist of other elements too.

If the decline of the *Arhat* is indicated by the accounts of Kanishka's Council, the growing importance of the *upāsakas* is revealed to us by texts collected earlier of the Treatises on Charity, Prohibitions and Rebirth in heaven. these special texts have been composed for the training of the laity and rebirth in heaven has been promised them as reward. These two facts must be considered highly significant.

The tendencies attributed by us to the thinkers of the Kashmirian School, are found affirmed in several *sūtras* of the *Ekottarāgama*. Thus the necessity of giving alms and its happy consequences have been many times proclaimed here. For example, in a *sūtra* dealing with the series of the Triads, charity has been placed in the front rank of deeds procuring

merits and leading to rebirth in heaven (Tok. XII, 1, p. 49b). Elsewhere the Buddha while visiting a cemetery, shows to a Brahmaṇa the bones of a person who had been born in heaven for having observed the five Prohibitions and performed the ten good actions (Tok. XII, 1, p. 86a, col. 6-10). In the 27th varga alone, the 2nd, 4th and 8th *sūtras* are found to contain unmistakable references to charity and the way of implementing it. The fourth one is particularly enlightening. The Buddha is here seen explaining to Bodhisattva Maitreya that it is due to the manner of making gifts that Bodhisattva Mahāsattva has obtained the six *pāramitās* as well as perfect illumination (Tok. XII, 1, p. 50a). The importance attributed to the themes of Charity and Rebirth in heaven, marks a return to the simple ethics of primitive Buddhism. Charity is a lay virtue par excellence ; in emphasising its efficacy, the compiler of the *Ekottarāgama* was endeavouring to popularise the qualities of sacrifice, zeal and compassion, foreign to the serene and indifferent Arhat.

The doctrine of the *Ekottara* is nevertheless coherent. It was essential that the Law must endure throughout a *bhadrakalpa* (Tok. XII, 1, p. 87a. col. 9). It is not the Arhats who were to ensure its duration, but the lay devotees or those among the clergy who had by their meritorious acts, secured rebirth in heaven. In this way, the inequality prevailing among the four orders of the faithful gradually tended to disappear. The 6th *sūtra* of the 27th varga is of utmost significance in this respect. The Lord is found here to impart the following teaching : "The bhikshus who have heard much, who know the past thoroughly and who are enlightened as to the present, are certainly the leaders in the great assembly. The bhikshuṇis who have heard much, who know, etc.... .. are certainly the leaders in the great assembly. The *upāsakas* who have heard much, etc.......are certainly the leaders in the great assembly. The *upāsikās* who have heard much, etc.........are certainly the leaders in the great assembly. These four classes of persons are certainly the leaders in the great assembly (Tok. XII, 1, p. 81a, col. 17 ; cf. *Aṅguttara Nikāya* II, p. 8). In this *sūtra*, as in the lists of priorities found in the beginning of the *Ekottara*, the four categories of the faithful are on the

same plain ; the ancient hierarchy tends gradually to disappear ; the principle of monachism itself seems to be in danger. The same state of mind is reflected also in another *sūtra* of the numerical collection. A bhikshu dies at Śrāvastī. The Buddha makes it known that the former would be reborn in hell. On the contrary, a *gṛihapati* who also dies at the same time is destined to be born in heaven (Tok. XII, 2, p. 13b). The desire to raise the prestige of the laity in the Church, manifests itself once more in this instance.

It has been already seen that Piṇḍola, the saint who remains in the world to ensure the permanence of the doctrine, was necessarily marked out to represent the new ideal. The growing popularity of his legend during the Kashmirian period is attested by a sutra of the *Ekottarāgama* which has not been noticed so far. This is the first *sūtra* of the 28th varga. By itself alone, it occupies 112 columns of characters in the Chinese translation while the following *sūtras* of the same chapter run respectively into 5, 18, 52, 22, 18 and 10 columns of characters. Its length suffices to reveal its importance and it would not be altogether out of point to give here a summary of it :

The scene is at the Bamboo Grove (*Veṇuvana*) in *Rāja-gṛiha*. The four great Śrāvakas, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Kāśyapa, Anuruddha and Piṇḍola express the opinion that the master of the house (*gṛihapati*) Pa-t'i, although a rich man, does not give alms, nor has he faith in the Law of the Buddha. He has set up in his residence seven rows of gates, each guar-ded by a porter who prevents the mendicants from entering. Nandā, the sister of the *gṛihapati* is not less miserly. Anuruddha carves out for himself an underground path, enters the house of Pa-t'i and appears before him. The rich house-holder is on his way to eat a cake ; he gives to the monk a small fragment of it. Anuruddha retires and Pa-t'i reproaches the porter. The latter replies that the door was closed and he does not know how the monk had come in,

Having finished the cake, the *gṛihapati* begins to eat a fish. Then Kāśyapa presents himself in the same manner. The same trifling amount of alms is given, Kāśyapa disappears. Same reproaches to the porter and the same reply of the latter, follow.

After a conversation had passed between Pa-t'i and his wife, Mahāmaudgalyāyana takes his flight and flying through space, appears in his turn before the *grihapati*. Astonished at seeing him sitting in the air Pa-t'i asks him whether he is a *deva* or a supernatural being. Mahāmaudgalyāyana replies that he is a bhikshu and has come to expound the Law. The lesson at first touches upon the two kinds of gifts viz, the giving of alms and the gift of the Law,—and the five prohibitions of the *uapsakas*. Here we come across the same formula as in the *sūtra* of Śrīgupta : 'He explained to him the marvellous *śastras* of the Law, viz. the *śastra* of Charity, the *sastra* of Prohibitions and the *śastra* concerning Rebirth in heaven...... ......" And Pa-t'i is converted after having listened to the four truths.

Afterwards the three Śrāvakas say to Piṇḍola : 'We have converted Pa-t'i ; it is for you now to convert Nandā'. At this moment the latter had prepared a cake. Piṇḍola approaches her by crossing the ground. She refuses to give him anything. He performs different miracles in her presence but she refuses all the same to give him food. Finally the monk stops breathing. Being afraid Nandā cries out to him, 'Be alive again ; I shall give you food'. Piṇḍola wakes from his trance. Finding afterwards that her cake is too large. Nandā prepares a smaller one but suddenly it grows large. She begins once more to make a small one which also grows large in its turn. Loosing patience she says to Piṇḍola : 'Choose the one that you will have !' The monk conducts her to the presence of the Buddha. She offers her cakes to the Tathāgatha and to the assembly of the bhikshus. When they are all satisfied the Buddha orders her to give the rest to the bhikshuṇīs, the upāsakas, the upāsikās and lastly to the poor. And as she has still a surplus the Buddha asks her to throw it into pure water. Afterwards the Lord expounds the Law to her, which comprises, the śāstras of Alms-giving, Prohibitions and Rebirth in heaven as well as the four truths. Nandā is converted and receives the five prohibitions.

Now Pa-t'i and Nandā had a younger brother who was in touch with king Ajātaśatru. He was much delighted to hear of the conversion of his brother and sister and fasted for seven

days, after which he was invited to a feast by the king of Magadha. He sent someone to ask the Buddha what types of food are permitted to the lay devotees. The Buddha gave instruction on that point and said to the bhikshus. "Henceforth I authorise you to invest the upasākas with five prohibitions (*śīla*) and the three refuges (*triśaraṇa*).

This *sūtra* is directly connected with the corresponding narrative of the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas of which it reproduces long passages (cf. its translation in Lévi and Chavannes *Les Seize Arhat*, pp. 100-03). It would be enlightening to emphasise the points of difference between the two texts. Among the various redactions of the same episode contained in the Vinayas, that of the Mahīśāsakas is characterised by a singular admixture of archaic material and later innovations. In order to secure the conversion of Pa-t'i's sister Piṇḍola pretends to crush her with a stone ; then he thrusts his arm into the frying pan in which she is frying her cakes. These enforcing methods are evidently reprehensible and the Buddha does not fail to condemn them. These belong obviously to the earlier stage in the development of the legend (see *supra* p. 91). On the contrary certain artifices destined to excuse or even to glorify Piṇḍola, appear to have been later additions. The other Vinayas (Dharmagupta, Sthavira and Sarvāstivādin) put into picture only two of the *Śrāvakas* viz Piṇḍola and Maudgalyāyana ; and while the latter refuses to display his supernatural powers in the presence of a layman, Piṇḍola does not hesitate to commit that indiscretion, thereby drawing upon himself the reprimand of the Buddha. The account preserved by the Mahīśāsakas makes four great Śrāvakas intervene, viz , Kāśyapa, Maudgalyāyana, Anuruddha and Piṇḍola. From that time Piṇḍola takes his rank among the greatest saints of the Church. Besides, each among Anuruddda, Kāśyapa and Maudgalyāyana is found to enter the house of Pa-t'i by supernatural means. Consequently Piṇḍola may very well be excused for having recourse to proceedings of the same nature in order to convert the sister of the *gṛihapati*. The innovations contained in the Vinaya of the Mahīśāsakas are therefore clearly favourable to Piṇḍola.

The sutra of the *Ekottarāgama* shows a still further stage

of development. The author has omitted the archaisms and reproduced the innovations with emphasis—Piṇḍola here no longer threatens the sister of Pa-t'i with a big stone; nor does he thrust his arm into the frying pan. He is always represented as one of the four great Śrāvakas and it is the example of the three others that inspires him to employ magical means. The Buddha too refrains from blaming him.

In the different Vinayas the miracle of Piṇḍola is narrated in connection with the rules prohibiting monks from manifesting supernatural faculties before a layman. For the author of the *Ekottara* the interest of the story lies elsewhere. His ultimate purpose is to illustrate the precepts regarding the training and duties of lay devotees. The conversion of Pa-t'i and his sister shows what must be the precept for the *upāsakas* and the *upāsikās*. The feast offered by Ajātaśatru is only a pretext for explaining the regulation of the lay devotees regarding food. Finally the Buddha is here seen authorising his disciples to provide the laity with the three refuges and the five prohibitions. Even the smallest details are found to bear an import consistent with the governing theme of the story. While expounding the doctrine before Pa-t'i Maudgalyāyana distinguishes two kinds of gifts viz. alms-giving, a work of the laity, which primarily means the gift of wealth, and preaching, a duty of the clergy which amounts to a gift of the Doctrine. It is thus the intention of the saint to establish that the virtue of Charity is the origin of all the merits acquired by the clergy and the laity. Besides the sister of Pa-t'i does not rest content by offering cakes to the Buddha and the bhikshus, as she does before her conversion, in the account preserved by the Mahīśāsakas. In the *Ekottara* version the bhikshus, the bhikshuṇis, the lay devotees and even the poor in general, are found to participate in her offering. The story-teller has clearly intended to associate with that miraculous love-feast the Buddha as well as all the categories of the faithful, from the eminent disciples down to the humble laymen including the poor community of Rajagṛiha.

If I have spent a little time in emphasising the distinctive features of the *Ekottarāgama* and the *sūtra* of Piṇḍola in particular, it is because these canonical texts of considerable

authority, transmit very accurately the tendencies of the Kashmirian School. It is no longer necessary to enter into long discussions to show that the same tendencies dominate the selection of fragments constituting the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. The unity of this little anthology depends less, in my opinion, on the personality of king Aśoka, than on that of the writer who has actually collected the stories. Apart from avadānas 5, 8 and 12 which are but pseudo-historical narratives belonging to the cycle of Aśokan legends, the nine others appear to be edifying stories referred by the narrator to the reign of Aśoka, but which might as well be placed in a different epoch. In stories 1, 3, 7 and 10, the principal personage is a woman and lay-worshipper ; in nos. 4 and 5 it is a śrāmaṇera ; in avadāna 10 it is a family of poor peasants ; only in two accounts the hero appears to be a śramaṇa ; in no. 2, it is a bhikshu who emits a fragrant smell as a result of having formerly sung the praise of the Law,—a virtue that could be easily practised by the people in general ; in narrative 9 it is Piṇḍola himself who continues to stay on earth without attaining Parinirvāṇa. The contrast between the chapter of the *Aokāvadāna* on the conversions of Upagupta in which only nirvāṇa-desiring Arhats have a role, and the last chapter of the A. W, Ch. in which the laity principally figures,—is indeed striking. In the former attention is focussed on a spiritual elite ; in the latter however the preference of the author goes to the humblest elements in the Church viz. the women, the poor and the śrāmaneras. Upagupta teaches his disciples the practices of monastic life. In the last chapter of the A. W. Ch. the personages are however seen acquiring merit by much simpler means viz. by singing the praise of the Law, by observing a correct demeanour, and above all by a generous gift of alms. We should note also the mention of the three Treatises dealing with precepts for the laity and the reception by Aśoka of Piṇḍola who is now completely rehabilitated. The fact must be recognised that the principal characters of the works of the Kashmirian period are assembled together in the last chapter of the A, W. Ch. This anthology is not therefore a haphazard collection of fragments without a leading idea. Consciously or not, its author has reproduced or adapted the narratives that

convey the convictions and intimate aspirations of his own as well as of his fellow Buddhists. Consequently his work, in itself sufficiently dull, has come to acquire a documentary value, out of proportion to its length or literary merit. Placed as an appendix, at the end of the A. W. Ch. it keeps in the background the entire content of the more ancient *Aśokāvadāna* in a just perspective. It offers, besides, an outline of the great directing principles which had, during the Kashmirian period, profoundly transformed the doctrine and instilled a new orientation into Buddhism.

APPENDICES

I

Ta-che-tu-luen, Chap. C.

(Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo XX, 5, p. 105a, col. 20)

The words falling from the mouth of the Buddha that are reproduced in the scripture, are of two classes : the Three Baskets (*Tripiṭaka*) which are the Law of the Listeners (*Śrāvaka*) ; and the *Mahāyāna* which is the Law of the Great Vehicle. Besides during the life time of the Buddha the expression 'Three Baskets' (*Tripiṭaka*) was not in use. At that time there were only the bhikshus upholding the *Sūtras*, those representing the *Vinaya* and lastly another group adhering to the *Mātṛikā*. *Śūtra* is the name of the sacred texts contained in the four *Āgamas*, and also that of the sacred literature of the *Mahāyāna*. The *śūtras* are of to two categories : first, the *sūtras* contained in the four *Āgamas* ; secondly the sacred texts of the Mahāyāna called the great *sūtras*. The texts coming under these two categories, both of the Greater and the Lesser Vehicles, the 250 prohibitions (*Prātimoksha*) and other analogous works—are precisely called *sūtras*.

That which is called *Vinaya*, is (the account of) the faults committed by the bhikshus. According to the precepts laid down by the Buddha, one must do this ; one must not do that ; in doing this one commits such fault. The abridged account is in eighty chapters. (The texts of the *Vinaya*) are similarly of two classes : first the *Vinaya* of the land of Mathurā which along with the *A-po-t'o-na* (*Avadāna*) and the *Jātakas*, runs into eighty chapters ; secondly the *Vinaya* of the land of Kashmir (*Ki-pin*)[8] that rejects the *Jātakas* and the *Avādānas*. The latter has retained merely the essential and contains only ten chapters ; but there is a (text entitled) *vibhāshā* in eighty chapters which is a commentary to it.

It will thus be seen that the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* and other sacred texts form parts of the *sūtras*. Because of the length of

these texts and the miraculous character of their contents they are set aside and for this reason are not included in the Three Baskets (*Tripiṭaka*).

II

The Legend of Aśoka in the Fen-pie-kong-to-luen

(Tripiṭaka ed. Tokyo XXIV, 4, pp. 55b-56b)

What is exactly implied by the expression, 'attainment of nirvāṇa by musing upon the body (*kāyasmṛiti*)'? Formerly, one hundred years after the death of the Buddha there had been a king named Aśoka who reigned over Jambudvīpa. His ministers, wives, elephants and horses totalled 84000 in all. Now this king while going round his kingdom, happened to come across king Yama who was in possession of eighteen hells and also of ministers and agents. He was interrogating the accused persons one after another. King Aśoka asked his followers, "Who is this individual?" "This is the king of the dead", they replied. "It is he who finally separates the good ones from the sinners". The king said, "Since the king of the dead has been able to create a hell for chastising guilty persons, cannot I, who am the ruler of the living, build up a hell too?" He interrogated the whole hody of his ministers: "Who can establish a hell?" The ministers replied, "It is only an extremely cruel person who could be the founder of a hell." The king ordered his ministers to find out a cruel person. Then the ministers began to look for such a man. They met a man seated on the ground, weaving a fishing net He had by his side a bow and some arrows. He was also in possession of hooks for catching fish. Besides he was feeding small birds with poisoned rice. Simultaneously the man was weaving a net, catching fish with the fish-hook, shooting arrows at birds and entrapping small birds. The ministers reported to the king what they had seen. Here was certainly the perfect example of a cruel man! The king said, "The man is extremely cruel. He can certainly manage an inferno". The king charged his men to summon him with the following words: "The king wishes to see you". The cruel one replied, "I am a poor and ignorant man. What need has the king of me?" They said,

"The king justly desires to take thee into his service so that thou mayst administer his hell". After this the royal messengers returned. In the house (of the cruel person) there was his old mother. He said to her, "The king has summoned me". "The mother asked her son, "Why has the king summoned you ?" The son said, "The king desires to give me the charge of managing his hell". The mother said, "If thou leavest me how shall I live ?" Then she clasped his son's feet and did not let him go. The son who was eager to free himself drew a knife and struck her. Having thus slain her he set out and arrived before the king. The king asked, "If your mother held you back, how have you been able to come ?" He said, "I have come after killing her". The king said, "This is really a cruel man. He would indeed be able to manage the hell". Then he entrusted the man with the task of raising the citadel of hell and placing boiling cauldrons, swords and trees there. Afterwards he conferred on the man the title of 'king of hell,' and placed under his orders several agents each of whom had a fixed occupation as in the realm of king Yama. The king further pronounced the following decree : "If anybody would enter this citadel thou shalt be empowered forthwith to make him suffer punishment without distinction of rank". And he added : "Even when I myself shall enter this place there shall be no obligation to permit me to leave".

Now there was an old bhikshu named "Well-Awakened" (*Suprabuddha*) who always roamed about begging for food. Arriving at the gate of the citadel he saw from without some beautiful fragrant flowers. Assuming that it was inhabited he at once entered the citadel. But he saw only tortures there. Being frightened he wished to withdraw but the jailer would not permit him to come out. The latter wanted to throw him into a boiling cauldron. The monk entreated : "Spare me a little till mid-day". While he was speaking, a man and a woman who were guilty of fornication, were brought for being put to torture. They were placed in a mortar and were pounded. In an instant they were reduced to froth. The monk saw them and then he recalled a saying of the Buddha : "The human body is like a mass of foam". How true was that utterance ! A moment later they were transformed once more into whitish

mass. He remembered afresh : "The human body is like a pile of white ashes. Numerous are its transformations. It resembles the glamours and illusions of magic. When one scrutinises it one finds nothing but falsity". Afterwards he reflected and came to realise that the current of his passions had been arrested and his bonds loosened. Once again the the jailer pressed him to enter the boiling vat. The bhikshu smiled. Becoming furious the jailer ordered four men to seize him by two arms and throw him into the cauldron. At this the water which was boiling became cold. And the bhikshu produced magically a lotus flower of thousand petals and seated himself on it with legs crossed. The jailer in astonishment reported the matter to king Aśoka : "Here there is an extraordinary thing in the prison. I pray that the king may condescend to come and watch for a moment". The king said, "I have previously issued this decree : 'Even when I myself shall enter it there shall be no obligation to allow me to come out'. How can I therefore enter it now ?" The man said to the king : "Just enter once. No evil shall befall you". Then the king went in after him. He saw the monk who had remained seated on the lotus and he asked him, "Who art thou ?" The other replied, "I am a monk". The monk further said to the king, "Thou art ignorant" The king said, "Why dost thou treat me as ignorant ?" The monk said in reply, "When thou wert an infant thou hadst offered a handful of earth to the Buddha. The Buddha had received it and had predicted as follows : 'In consequence, thou, king of the iron wheel, shalt reign over Jambudvipa under the name of Aśoka. In a single day thou shalt raise 84000 stūpas'. Is this prison a stūpa ?" The king came to realise the situation as he reflected. Then he repented his past misdeeds and accepted Suprabuddha as master. Thereupon he destroyed the prison and acquired much merit. He erected 84000 stūpas This precisely is the sense of the expression : 'the attaining of nirvāṇa by musing upon the body (*kāyasmṛiti*)'.

What is exactly implied by the expression 'attainment of nirvāṇa by musing upon death ?' Formerly king Aśoka served the Law and proved himself to be devoted. He constantly entertained 500 monks who (living) in the palace, were never

in want of the four (indispensable) things, At the same time he gave alms to 500 mendicants outside. Moreover he used to send provisions to the *araṇya* for entertaining 500 monks. And inside the four gates of the city he gave alms to the needy. These acts of charity being prolonged his wealth diminished little by little. Now his younger brother named *Sieu-kia-tu lu* (Sugātra ?) had no faith in the three venerable objects. The prime minister Yaśas and queen Pleasant-Countenance were also devoid of faith. These three personages by common consent, began to importune the king. They repeatedly remonstrated with him in these terms : 'In making gifts to the monks you are exhausting the resources of the state. Why are you acting in this manner ?" The king said, "Please mind what you are saying ! What causes the ruin of the wicked in the world, is (their) wicked utterances". *Sieu-kia-tu-lu* said to the king : "These monks are all young. They feed themselves without restraining their tongue ; they have intense passion and they live among women in the inner apartments. How can one have faith in them ?" The king replied, "The monks take care of themselves. They protect themselves with the Law. They practise moderation and observe the prohibitions. They are not victims of lust."

Eventually *Sieu-kia-tu-lu* went hunting. He found himself in the midst of a pack of stags and among these there was also a man. He spread his net, caught the stags and came upon the man, "Who art thou ?" he asked him. The man said, "I lost my parents at the age of eight years. Deserted in the hills, I was nursed by a doe and thus it continues till now". Aśoka's brother asked once more, "What do you feed upon during the time when the does have no milk ?" "Along with stags I eat grass and leaves in order to sustain my life," the man said. And then he asked him : "Do you have your desires still ?". The man said in reply that he still had them. Then he released him and reported his adventure to the king in the following words : "This man living on grass and with a feeble and spare frame, has still his desires. All the more reason therefore that the monks who have food at their discretion and whose bodies are stout and sleek, cannot be free from desires !"

The king reflected thus : "Which monk shall I employ in order to convert my younger brother ?" Then he had recourse to a strategem. He pretended to be interested in setting out on an expedition. He assembled his troops in large number, issued his orders and actually started. Previously he had given the following order to his ministers : "When I shall have departed raise my younger brother to the royal status". Accordingly the ministers exhorted the latter to put on royal robes. He pretended to refuse. The ministers said, "Please agree ! We shall dress you". Then they invested him with the diadem and royal robes. Afterwards all of them cried out —"Hurrah" ! and standing up, they surrounded him, ready to wait on him according to the ceremonial befitting royal saints. When king Aśoka saw that the thing had been arranged, he entered and said, "Well, your Majesty !" Seeing the king, the younger brother became ashamed and embarrassed. King Aśoka said, "For a time I had been on tour. Wherefore have you done all this ? Is it proper that because I, the king of the iron-wheel, am not there, you should loosen yourself in this manner ? I am going to have you executed immediately". He ordered the fetters and iron collar to be brought and secretly instructed a man of confidence to inform the monks. Suprabuddha thought ; 'It is necessary to intercede in favour of the guilty'. (The king then said to his brother :) 'My intention is clearly to put you to death. But considering that you have been a king for only a few days and you still remain unsatisfied, I permit you to remain king for seven days more. The ministers shall remain at thy command in the same way as they are at mine ; at meals the queens, and concubines shall serve thee. For seven days thou shalt act in a manner as if thou hast ascended the throne". The order was carried out. But when the period of seven days was over the king's younger brother had still not experienced any pleasure. The monks had come to intercede on his behalf. Carrying their bowl and holding their iron-tipped staff they arrived at the gate of the royal palace. The king asked them, "Oh monks, what do you desire ?" They said, "We wish to beg of you the man who is going to die". The king said, "That guilty person must die. You cannot ask for his life, oh, monks !" The monks said for the second time :

"We want him for the sole purpose of making him a monk. We shall make him cultivate the Way". The king said, "Ask this man if he would cultivate the Way". The monks then questioned him : "Now we reclaim you so that you may become a *śramaṇera.* Can you become so ?" He replied : "I shall not refuse even if you shall make a slave of me ; there is thus all the more reason that I should assent to the proposal of making myself a *śrāmaṇera*". The king said, "It is difficult to live a religious life. One must therefore weigh very carefully in one's mind, whether one can really do it. The rule of the monks obliges them to wear coarse clothes, to eat wretched food, to tire their limbs and to exterminate their passions in order to apply themselves solely to the cultivation of the Way. Thou art used to excesses and pleasures. How canst thou endure these austerities ?" He replied, "Since otherwise I must die, why should I not be able to stand these austerities ?" The king said, "If you can go through these, I shall authorise you to take to religious life. Manage to beg your food for seven days". He ordered him to enter the palace. When *Sieu-kia-tu-lu* went to beg he gave him the very worst type of food,—loathsome waste products. Then he made him dress himself in tattered clothes and go begging for his food in all the apartments. Everywhere he received miserable food. Profoundly moved at having escaped death, he ate this wretched stuff with pleasure. When seven days had passed the king found he had felt neither regret nor displeasure. Then he authorised him to enter religious life and said to him, "You have said constantly that the monks are accustomed to pleasure, they have numerous attachments and it is difficult to have faith in them. The foodstuff that you have begged is yet fine and delicate because it belongs to my palace. The eatables that the monks beg, are much worse. Since such stuff constitutes their food, how can they still feel any desire ?" Then the king committed him to the care of Suprabuddha and he became a *śramaṇa.*

The king sent him on a mission to the city of Takshaśilā. In this city he passed through the different stages of contemplation and *dhyāna* sometimes in the cemeteries, sometimes under a tree. Now in the cemeteries he used to

contemplate the dead body. One night he came across a *preta* striking a corpse. He asked him : "Why do you strike this corpse ?" (The *preta*) said : "It is because of this corpse that I am in my present state. That is why I strike it". The monk said : "Why do you not strike your own spirit ? Of what use is this act of striking the corpse ?" At that moment there was besides a *deva* who happened to sprinkle celestial flowers of *mandāra* on a corpse. Once more the monk asked : "Why sprinkle these (flowers) over this loathsome corpse ?" (The *deva*) replied : "It is because of this corpse that I have been able to be born among the *devas*. This one has been a virtuous friend (*kalyāṇamitra*) to me. That is why I have come to sprinkle flowers remembering the past benefits". The monk said : "In stead of sprinkling flowers on this disgusting corpse, why not scatter them on your own spirit ? The origin of all our good or evil actions can be traced to our spirits. You people, why do you neglect the origin and merely seize upon the end ?" Afterwards *Sieu-kia-tu-lu* said to himself : "From death, I have come back to life. This is the factor that will ultimately lead me to salvation " Thereupon he contemplated the dead body and meditated on death. He reflected on, analysed and comprehended the impermanence and emptiness of physical pains and the unreality of the body. Then he became an *arhat*. It is for this reason that it has been said : "He who meditates on death, attains *nirvāṇa* too."

NOTES

1. In the *Samantapasadika* (*Suttavibhaṅga* I p. 302) this personage is sometimes given the title of *thera*, sometimes that of *samaṇera*.

2. According to narrative 5 of the A, W. Ch. Aśoka possessed a jewel known as *chintāmaṇi* which had originally belonged to Ajātaśatru and on which the latter had engraved the following inscription : "Bequeathed to a poor king, —the Aśoka of the future." According to Tāranātha's account (*History*, p. 35) when Aśoka dug the earth in order to possess the relics buried by Ajātaśatru he found a copper plaque on which it was written that, in future the relics of the Tathāgata would be acquired by "a poor ruler". The two traditions are very close to each other without coinciding completely.

3. Kanishka's Council is actually to be described as the Fourth Buddhist Council if the Council of Pāṭaliputra supposed to have been held during the reign of Aśoka, is regarded as historical. See note 3 to the Introduction above (pp. 17-18). The later references in this chapter to the Council held under the patronage of Kanishka, should be considered in the light of the above remark.—*Translator.*

4. The approved reading of the Bhabru edict universally accepted now, enables us to see that Aśoka was addressing here the Buddhist clergy in general and not the Magadhan clergy in particular. He introduces himself in the inscription as the 'king of Magadha' (*Piyadasi lājā māgadhe saṃghaṃ abhivādetūnaṃ āhā*......cf. Hultzach *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* Vol. I, p. 172.)—*Translator.*

5. The view expressed by the author that the development of Buddhism has been from the original position of a predominantly moral creed towards a subtle and complex doctrine of philosophical abstractions, may be accepted in outline. In fact, that is the usual pattern followed by historical

religions in course of their expansion. It is however difficult to agree with him when he says that the simple conception of heaven and hell in primitive Buddhism was only *gradually* pushed aside by the doctrine of *nirvāṇa* as the faith began to acquire later a metaphysical character. So far as our sources indicate, the concept of *nirvāṇa* formed part of the original teachings of the Buddha. Thus in the Pāli *Mahāparinibbānasutta* one of the earliest extant canonical texts, the Buddha clearly refers to his own forthcoming *nirvāṇa* using the verb itself in the context : *punachaparaṃ Ānanda yadā Tathāgato anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbāyati tadāyaṃ pathavī kampati saṃkampati sampakampati sampabedhati* (III, 20). Throughout the canon, the Buddha is represented on numerous occasions, as discussing the nature of *Nirvāṇa* with his disciples (cf. Mahesh Chandra Ghosh *Buddha-Prasaṅga* Visvabharati 1363 B. S., pp. 37-57 and B. C. Law *Concepts of Buddhism* 2nd ed. Amsterdam, 1966, pp. 116-38 for detailed references and exposition ; cf. also Kern *Manual of Indian Buddhism* p. 57 ; T. Stcherbatsky *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa* p. 60). The fact seems to be that from the very beginning of its history Buddhism prescribed two different goals for the clergy and the laity. The *summon bonum* for the monks and nuns was invariably *nirvāṇa* ; whereas the lay-worshippers (*upāsakas* and *upāsikās*) were exhorted to lead a virtuous life the reward for which was declared to be heaven (*svarga*) and deviation from which was to lead to hell (*naraka, niraya*). This belief in heaven and hell was shared by primitive Buddhism with popular Hinduism and early Jainism. The Pāli *Dhammapada* which according to Senart (*Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi* Tome II, Paris, 1886, pp. 314-22) and Hultzsch (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* Vol. I, Introduction pp. xlix-liv) reflects to a large extent the moral character of primitive Buddhism and is on that ground comparable to the contents of the Aśokan edicts, mentions the twin concepts of heaven and hell and *nirvāṇa* side by side in verse 126 :

Gabbhameke uppajjanti nirayaṃ pāpakammino
Saggaṃ sugatino yanti parinibbanti anāsavā.

Aśoka's silence over *nirvāṇa* in his inscriptions does not prove that the concept of *nirvāṇa* had not yet come to be a feature of Buddhist teachings. Aśoka expresses firm faith in heaven and hell and does not mention *nirvāṇa* as the goal of spiritual life simply because he was a lay-worshipper (*upāsaka*) himself and was mainly addressing the common people (or the laity) through his edicts. The respective concepts of heaven and hell and *nirvāṇa* should therefore be regarded as of simultaneous growth in Buddhism and the origin and development of the latter cannot be placed after those of the former.—*Translator.*

6. If the account of the conversions brought about in Ceylon by Mahinda (Mahendra) is posterior to the traditions regarding the despatch of missionaries by Aśoka, the absence of any reference to the *Bālapaṇḍitasutta* in the former text appears surprising, more so because reference to the *Devadūtasutta* occurs in the earliest portion of the legend. This naturally appears to corroborate the opinion previously advanced by me, namely that the *Bālapaṇḍitasutta* had been introduced into the body of the Pāli texts only at a sufficiently late date.

7. See note 3 above.—*Translator.*

8. Sylvain Lévi's identification of *Ki-pin* with Kashmir has not been universally accepted. Sten Konow has brought forward arguments to prove that the Chinese name *Ki-pin* stands for Kapiśa, the country drained by the northern tributaries of the Kabul river (*Ep. Ind.* Vol. XIV pp. 290-93). As Watters however points out, in many Chinese texts *Ki-pin* or *Ka-pin* "is a geographical term of vague and varying extension, and not the designation of a particular country. It is applied in different works to Kapiśa, Nagara, Gandhāra, Udyāna and Kashmir" (*On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India* Vol. I, p. 259). For its use in the respective senses of Kashmir and Kapiśa cf. P. C. Bagchi *Le Canon Bouddhique en Chine* Tome I p. 160, Tome II, p. 508.—*Translator.*

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ERRATA

Page 19, line 16, read	'Assembly-Raising'	*for* 'Assemblv-Raising'
Page 24. „ 4, „	Saṃghabhara	*for* Saghambhara
Page 48, „ 13, „	Sutrist	*for* Sturist
Page 49. „ 13, „	Sutrist	*for* Sturist
Page 64, „ 28, „	*Aśokāvadāna*	*for* *Aśokavadan*
Page 78, page-no. „	78	*for* 73
Page 79, line 31, „	Capital[4]	*for* Capital
Page 106, headline, „	VI	*for* SIX
Page 112, line 8, „	Monastery	*for* Monostery
Page 128, „ 16, „	Chong-a-han	*for* Chong-a-than
Page 162, „ 5. „	*kılau*	*for* *klıau*
Page 175, „ 31, „	Patriarch	*for* Patriach
Page 2, „ 36, „	Account	*for* Accounts
Page 190, „ 24, „	Menander	*for* Menader
Page 191, „ 24, „	Asaṅga	*for* Āsaṅga
30, „	Asaṅga	*for* Āsaṅga
35, „	Asaṅga	*for* Āsaṅga
Page 192. „ 12, „	Asaṅga	*for* Āsaṅga
Page 196, „ 23, „	Weighed	*for* Weighd
Page 202, „ 26, „	*Upasika*	*for* *Upasika*
Page 208, „ 1, „	*Śāstras*	*for* *Śāsras*
Page 212, lines 10-11, „	'Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas have'	*for* 'Bodhisattva Mahāsattva has'
Page 228, line 23, „	*Summum bonum*	*for* *Summon bonum*